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SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN NEW ORLEANS, A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE FAILURE OF SOCIAL CONTROL.
CRAIN, ROBERT L * AND OTHERS
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THE ISSUE OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION WAS STUDIED AS IT OCCURED IN SEVEN SOUTHERN CITIES OF THE UNITED STATES, RESULTING FROM THE 1954 "BROWN" DECISION OF THE SUPREME COURT. THESE CITIES WERE COLUMBUS, JACKSONVILLE, NEW ORLEANS, MONTGOMERY, ATLANTA, MIAMI, AND BATON ROUGE. CASE STUDY DATA WERE GATHERED THROUGH INTERVIEW RESPONSES AND PERSONAL FILES OF MANY INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS, SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, PUBLIC OFFICIALS, AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS. PRIMARY EMPHASIS WAS PLACED ON A SINGLE CASE STUDY, THAT OF NEW ORLEANS. AT THE TIME THIS STUDY TOOK PLACE, THERE WAS A BREAKDOWN OF SOCIAL CONTROL OVER THE PROBLEM OF SCHOOL INTEGRATION, BRINGING ON INTENSE CONFLICTS INVOLVING STREET DEMONSTRATIONS, SCHOOL BOYCOTTS, AND DISPUTES BETWEEN THE LOUISIANA STATE LEGISLATURE AND THE FEDERAL COURTS. THE MAIN VARIABLE CONSIDERED IN THE CASE STUDIES ABOUT EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION WHILE MAINTAINING SOCIAL CONTROL WAS THE DEGREE OF CIVIC ELITE ACQUIESCENCE--(1) WILLINGNESS TO DESEGREGATE AND (2) ABILITY TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER DURING THE PERIOD OF INTEGRATION. IN ADDITION, TWO OTHER FACTORS WERE CONSIDERED--(1) THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD AND ITS DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND (2) THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT WITH ITS DEMANDS AND INFLUENCES. ALL OF THIS INFORMATION WAS ANALYZED AND SOME SOCIOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS WERE DRAWN, EXPLAINING WAYS IN WHICH DIFFERENT ECONOMIC BASES, POPULATIONS, AND GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURES MAKE CITIES DIFFERENT IN THEIR SYTLES OF DECISION-MAKING. THE AUTHORS CONCLUDED THAT AT THE HEART OF CONFLICTS OVER SCHOOL DESEGREGATION ARE THOSE WHO CAN CONTROL THE DEGREE OF ORDER OR DISORDER IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF A PARTICULAR CITY. (JH)

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SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN NEW ORLEANS

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE FAILURE OF SOCIAL CONTROL

by

Robert L. Crain and Morton Inger

with the Assistance of

Gerald A. McWorter

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The study put us in touch with a group of men and women who were called upon to perform some courageous acts in a situation of great turmoil and in the face of real personal danger. This is a study of the failure of New Orleans to desegregate peacefully, but it is also a study of the way in which a city on the brink of total disaster managed to save itself. Although it is true that there was violence in New Orleans, it is equally true that the city avoided the serious tragedy that Birmingham suffered. The integrated schools were boycotted, but the public school system itself survived. As President Kennedy noted, all Americans should be grateful to the good people of New Orleans, and especially to the Orleans Parish school board.

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INTRODUCTION

During 1964 and 1965 we studied the school desegregation processes of seven cities in the Deep South: Miami and Jacksonville in Florida, Atlanta and Columbus in Georgia, New Orleans and Baton Rouge in Louisiana, and Montgomery in Alabama. In each of these cities, the school board approached desegregation warily, wondering whether they would find themselves embroiled in a furious community conflict that would bring violence in the streets, a boycott of the schools, or the state government's closing the schools altogether. Yet only one of these cities--New Orleans--actually had difficulty. In the others, if mobs did gather they were quickly and effectively dispersed. (In Jacksonville the home of one of the Negro plaintiffs was bombed, and this anomaly prompted us to search for possible similarities between New Orleans and Jacksonville.)

In New Orleans, however, desegregation brought on an intense conflict which lasted the entire school year. There were daily street demonstrations, a year-long boycott of the integrated schools, continuous harassment of parents who attempted to break the boycott, and an almost constant battle between the state legislature and the federal courts which repeatedly jeopardized the position or the school board and forced the school system into a severe financial crisis.

Relatively little is known about the way social control is maintained in the face of community opposition to governmental action, and almost as little is known about the reasons why this control sometimes breaks down. We grew so fascinated by the difference between New Orleans and the other cities in our study (particularly Atlanta, which desegregated a year later with no difficulty) that we arranged for Morton Inger to return to New Orleans and spend an additional ten days interviewing participants in the school crisis there. He interviewed forty-one people in all (forty in person and one by long-distance telephone). The interviews ranged from fifteen minutes to five hours in length, arranging one hour and twenty minutes.

We must emphasize that this research is not simply a case study of New Orleans: we also prepared analyses of the other six cities (based on a total of 120 interviews), although we have chosen not to report them here. And it is the material from these analyses which has afforded the research staff a comparative context for the analysis of New Orleans. Thus, our report is as much a study of why social control prevailed in the other cities as it is a study of why control failed in New Orleans.

The report consists of six chapters. Chapter I is an overview of the ways in which school desegregation was resisted (or not resisted) in the South between 1954 and 1964. It provides the reader with an understanding of the alternatives which southerners perceived when faced with court-ordered desegregation. Chapter II is the longest chapter and is a detailed study of the school crisis in New Orleans. Chapters III and IV are devoted to analyzing the data provided in Chapter II, first by examining the evidence for and against several possible explanations for the New Orleans crisis and then (in Chapter IV) making some comparisons, both subjective and statistical, among the seven cities in the study. Chapter V digresses from the main theme of this analysis to examine the way in which the civil rights movement differs in the seven cities. Chapter VI attempts to integrate a few of the elements of the New Orleans study with our earlier analysis of patterns of decision-making regarding school integration in northern cities, given in our companion volume, School Desegregation in the North, Report 110-A.

The principal conclusion our analysis has drawn is twofold: first, it was not a matter of chance that there was much conflict in New Orleans and little in Atlanta, and second, the roots of the conflict lay in the social structure of the city. At the heart of such an analysis is the study of the men who hold positions of high prestige in the city--the civic elite, as we have called them. In a sense, this study gives support to both sides of the argument concerning whether there is a power structure in American communities. On the one hand, the absence of social control in New Orleans can be attributed largely to the failure of the civic elite to become involved in the issue. By avoiding the most important decision in recent New Orleans history, the elite almost disqualifies itself from consideration as a power structure, in the sense in which that term is sometimes used. On the other hand, the fact that the withdrawal of the elite so heavily influenced the community's behavior in the issue indicates that the composition and structure of the civic elite was an important factor in shaping the decision-making processes of the cities studied here. Hence we consider the civic elite an important object of study to the social scientist interested in the American city.

CHAPTER I

OVERVIEW

On "Black Monday"--May 17, 1954--the Supreme Court of the United States presented its decision in the case of Brown et al. v. the Board of Education of Topeka. The decision ushered in a decade in which the desegregation of southern schools remained the dominant issue in each fall's newspaper headlines; a decade in which Thurgood Marshall and Earl Warren became heroic figures; a decade of violence and the beginnings of a revolution in American racial relations. A great deal has been written about this story, and we have no reason to summarize it here.[1] The task of this report is to describe the issue facing the southern school boards we have studied and then attempt to determine the characteristics of different cities which caused them to handle the issue in different ways.

Over the ten years from 1954 to 1964, the school desegregation issue was constantly changing, since the perceived choices available to a school board differed depending upon where the school board stood in the pattern of diffusion of desegregation. We can oversimplify a bit and say that the desegregation issue moved south from the Mason-Dixon line in four stages.

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[1] The most complete history is by Muse (1964). Of course, the day-to-day chronicle appears in the Southern School News from 1954 to 1965, whose staff produced a volume on the period edited by Shoemaker (1957).

Immediately after the Brown decision, there was a period of relative quiet which, as it turned out, preceded a storm. A separate suit, heard at the same time as Brown, resulted in desegregating the public schools of Washington, D.C. There was a flurry of picketing, a slight jump in the number of whites withdrawing from the public schools, and the crisis there was over. Although the Brown decision did not order immediate desegregation anywhere, three large border cities (Baltimore, Louisville, and St. Louis) chose to desegregate immediately.[2] Cincinnati had desegregated a few years earlier, and Topeka, the city in the title of the Supreme Court decision, had adopted a desegregation plan eight months before the decision.[3] Most southern editors and political leaders rode the fence; the Times-Picayune of New Orleans foresaw strife, but other papers were more optimistic. In the reaction of the politicians there was no evidence of a solid South. Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana commented: "I don't want to criticize the Supreme Court. . . . [The decision] is bound to have a very great effect until we adjust to it." Virginia's Attorney General, J. Lindsey Almond, who would be elected to the governor's office on a platform of upholding massive resistance" to school integration (but who as governor would see that massive resistance collapse) said: "Virginia will approach the question realistically and endeavor to work out some rational adjustment." But other southern leaders such as Senator James O. Eastland of Mississippi and Governor Herman Talmadge of Georgia were ready to throw down the gauntlet. Said Eastland: "The South will not abide by, or obey, this legislative decision by a political court."[4]

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[2] Louisville's desegregation is described by Carmichael and James (1957). St. Louis is described in a report of the Civil Rights Commission (Davis, 1962), and one useful source on Washington is Hansen (1957).

[3] For accounts of several pre-1954 desegregation decisions, see Williams and Ryan (1954).

[4] All quotes from Muse (1964, Chap. 2).

Soon the Deep South would rally around the Eastlands and the Talmadges. Meanwhile, the border states continued to desegregate schools. In 1954, 1955 and 1956, the border states of Texas, Oklahoma, Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware experienced considerable desegregation. There were scattered demonstrations of opposition in 1954 and 1955, and in 1956 there were three demonstrations of considerable importance. In Sturgis, Kentucky, the local high-school students went on strike. At first the school board agreed to put off desegregation for a year; then the governor called in the National Guard and a serious effort was made to break the strike. But a few weeks later the Attorney General ruled that, since neither Sturgis nor Clay (an adjoining county) had adopted desegregation plans, the enrollment of the Negroes was illegal, and desegregation was put off for a year. In Clinton, Tennessee, a near-riot was broken up by state police, but desegregation was accomplished. In Mansfield, Texas, however, where another mob formed, Governor Allen Shivers chose to intercede for the segregationists, and the Mansfield schools remained segregated until after much of the rest of Texas had integrated. Clinton and Mansfield each represented innovations. Clinton was the first community aroused by a professional racist agitator--in this case, John Casper, whose travels through the South were later cut short by a jail sentence. Mansfield, on the other hand, represented the first intervention on the part of the state to prevent local desegregation, and such intervention was to be the pattern throughout the South.[5] By the beginning of the 1956-57 school year the South was divided neatly into two regions: the border states, where considerable integration had already taken place, and the South, where nearly all schools would remain segregated for the next few years.

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[5] Mansfield, Sturgis, and Clinton are all reported in pamphlets prepared by the Anti-Defamation League. For Mansfield, see Griffin and Freedman (n.d.); for Sturgis, see Giffin (n.d.); and for Clinton, see Holden, Valien, and Valien (n.d.).

In 1957, two different and contradictory examples were set, and these two examples were to serve as precedent for two opposing theories of desegregation. One of the examples was, of course, Little Rock. The Little Rock story is long and a good deal has been written about it.[6] Governor Orval Faubus of Arkansas repeatedly argued that there would be violence if the Little Rock schools were desegregated. Then, in order to prevent violence, he marched the National Guard into Little Rock and the Negro students were turned back. After ten days of negotiation, the Department of Justice obtained an injunction to permit the Negro students to cross the National Guard lines. Faubus replied by removing the guard and again prophesied that there would be violence. When school opened, a mob of about one thousand persons succeeded in turning the Negro students back. Then federal troops descended upon the city with fixed bayonets, and Little Rock's Central High became virtually a military outpost. This did not end the Little Rock crisis. The troops remained at the school during the rest of the 1957-58 school year; then in the fall of 1958 the state legislature passed a bill giving the governor the authority to close the public schools, and Faubus did so. During 1958-59 most of the white students attended private schools, and many Negro students went to school outside the city. Also during 1958 the segregationists attempted to recall the Little Rock school board, and the board obligingly resigned to permit new elections. Two rival slates--one segregationist, one moderate--entered candidates, and each took three seats on the six-member board. Conditions remained rancorous, gradually building to a new climax, and recall petitions were again circulated--one recalling the moderates and one recalling the segregationists. Both recall questions were put on the same ballot, and the segregationists were recalled. (Thanks to the small number of voters who voted to recall both groups, the ballot came close to eliminating the entire board, but the moderates managed to stay in by a few votes.)

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[6] There are several books on Little Rock; in particular, see Hays (1958), Blossom (1959), and Record and Record (1960).

When the 1958-59 school year ended, Little Rock's private schools were on the verge of bankruptcy, and a federal court order requiring the reopening of public schools brought the issue gracefully to a close. Over the course of the crisis, a school superintendent, one and one-half school boards, and a congressman had been turned out of office, and, according to one widely circulated estimate, Little Rock had attracted absolutely no new industry during the crisis. Faubus had demonstrated, for any southern official who wanted to learn, how to offer total resistance to desegregation. Unfortunately, he had also demonstrated what lay in store for the school system that tried it. Two important precedents had been set: first, federal troops had been used to prevent disobedience of court orders; second, when the Little Rock school board had asked for a delay in desegregation (until after Faubus' term as governor had expired) the Supreme Court, meeting in special session in which each member signed the "stern and sweeping" decision, had made it clear that violence was not a justification for delaying desegregation.[7] Eventually, Governor Faubus was to retreat from his inflammatory segregationist position. In the entire Little Rock situation, there was only one person who clearly seemed to profit from the conflict. Dale Alford, the only segregationist on the original school board, had managed to win a seat in the House of Representatives.

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[7] Muse (1964) calls this decision (Cooper v. Aaron) "The most important pronouncement of the [Supreme Court] on public-school desegregation next to the Brown rulings of 1954 and 1955." Peltason (1961, p. 190), in his account of the ambiguities facing the judges who enforced the Brown decision, describes the court's opinion as "blunt, forceful, and powerfully written." He then adds: "Many civil rights advocates wished that the Court had been as forceful in 1954."

Earlier we commented that there were two precedents set in 1957. The second involved a group of three cities in North Carolina which desegregated together that year. Under the leadership of Governor Luther H. Hodges, North Carolina adopted a pupil-placement law giving local boards authority to assign pupils to schools according to various criteria. In order to demonstrate that the law was not simply a device to prevent any desegregation, a call was made for cities to volunteer to desegregate their schools. The three largest cities in the state--Charlotte, Winston-Salem, and Greensboro--agree. None of the three cities was under court order to desegregate, but preliminary legal action was taking place in all three. The three cities stayed in constant communication, made their public announcement simultaneously, and desegregated the same day. Only twelve Negroes entered white schools in the three cities, but this was an important crack in the wall of southern resistance.

In Charlotte, white students badgered one Negro girl into withdrawing, but this incident was eclipsed by Little Rock, and North Carolina congratulated itself. So here was the alternative example: a city could accept school desegregation as inevitable, take whatever action was necessary to keep it limited to token integration, and define the segregationist demonstrators as the enemy, rather than the NAACP or the Supreme Court.

During 1958 school integration was at a standstill. Virginia experimented with closing public schools in Warren County, Charlottesville, and Norfolk.[8] School-closing was unpopular in Norfolk and Charlottesville, and the "massive resistance" laws were ruled invalid in time for school to open for the second semester in both cities. Only Warren County managed to maintain a private school organization: there, whites did not reenter public schools until September, 1959, and the private schools continued to draw off white students even then. For the segregationists, Warren County was an ideal battleground. The major industry was absentee-owned and determined to keep silent. The result was that the local labor union was able to rule the situation unopposed, thus it supplied the leadership for the private school movement. But this combination of a weak business elite, a strong working class organization, a disorganized middle class, and an absence of institutions promoting political pluralism is a rare one.[9] In Norfolk, for example, a powerful public school movement organized very quickly.

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[8] For a discussion of the general situation in Virginia, see Muse (1961). For the Norfolk case, see Campbell, Bowerman, and Price (1960).

By 1959, local school officials throughout the South were aware of the dangers that accompanied massive resistance, and people began trying to learn from Little Rock and from North Carolina. The phase of "massive resistance" really ended at this point. From then on, school systems continued to stall on desegregation but spent most of their energies trying to avoid interference from segregationist governors and the Citizens Councils.

Between 1959 and 1963, the largest cities in each of the southern states desegregated their schools: Miami in 1959; Houston and New Orleans in 1960; Atlanta, Dallas, and Memphis in 1961; Birmingham and Charleston in 1963. At the state level, the war was over. The victory was not without bloodshed, however. First, a white boycott made New Orleans "another Little Rock," as network television showed the near-hysterical "cheerleaders" screaming at the Negro children who walked each day into two nearly empty desegregated schools. Then, on September 15, 1963, in Birmingham, five Negroes (four children and one teenager) were murdered--four by the bombing of a Negro church.

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[9] For this case study, see Levy (1961).

The year 1963 was more or less the last of this third period of school desegregation, when local school systems were looking for ways to permit token desegregation without violence and without closing the schools. After this, the battle against the Brown decision became a rout. In 1963, as many as 126 school systems desegregated without waiting for court orders;[10] and in 1963 and 1964, the Defense Department, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and the Department of Justice began teaming up to deal with cities in "impacted areas"--areas having high concentrations of military and other government personnel, where federal funds were supplied to local systems to educate their children. In 1964, over three hundred districts were desegregated without being under court order. Then, in 1965, Title VI of the new Civil Rights Act, requiring the government to withhold federal aid from any segregated district, went into effect, and 94 per cent of the remaining districts agreed to desegregate that year. The only remaining pocket of resistance was a part of Mississippi and Louisiana.

Thus there were four distinct climates in which initial desegregation could take place: the climate of border-state voluntarism, the climate of massive resistance, that of the post-massive-resistance era (from 1959 to 1963), and that of the period after the collapse of resistance at the state level. The statistical data for each period are given in Table I.1. Of course, after

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[10] All statistics from Southern School News.

TABLE I.1

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS DESEGREGATED EACH YEAR, 1954-64

School Districts	Border Voluntarism (Compliance)			Massive Resistance (Little Rock)		Post-Massive Resistance (Post-Little Rock)				Resistance Collapses (Compliance)	
	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964
West Virginia . . .	68	80	95	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Maryland.	4	48	87	91	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Missouri.	47	47	79	86	86	93	93	95	95	95	95
Kentucky.	0	21	61	64	70	73	83	83	89	99	100
Oklahoma.	0	33	76	80	75	75	79	81	81	81	66[a]
Delaware.	17	19	21	29	33	37	47	100	100	100	100
Texas	0	10	12	17	17	17	18	17	19	29	52
Virginia.	0	0	0	0	3	5	9	16	25	43	64
North Carolina. . .	0	0	0	2	2	4	6	6	10	23	51
Tennessee	0	1	1	2	2	3	5	13	19	32	45
Arkansas.	1	1	2	4	4	4	4	4	5	6	11
Florida	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	7	15	24	33
Louisiana	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	3	4
Georgia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.5	.5	2	7
South Carolina. . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	17
Alabama	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	8
Mississippi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

Source: Southern School News Statistical Summary, 1965-66.

Underlined figures are those which represent an increase of 7 per cent or more from previous year.

[a] Slight decreases in percentages are the result of combining school districts. The number of school districts was generally decreasing during this period.

initial desegregation, southern school systems soon find themselves under pressure to "go beyond tokenism." For example, some of the larger southern cities have agreed to speed up desegregation. We can view this as a fifth period or climate in which desegregation must be faced.

In a sense, school desegregation is a different issue in each of these eras, since the perceived alternatives available to the school system are different and the different aspects of the problem change in their relative magnitude. In 1957, the major problem facing a southern school board was deciding what the courts would do if the school system tried this or that device. As Peltason has pointed out, the Supreme Court's decisions were ambiguous, and the individual federal judges in the South had no handy way of resolving the cross-pressures they were under. One judge might demand immediate desegregation, another might accept a very gradual plan. But by 1959, a pattern of court decisions had made it clear that token desegregation would be acceptable and that it could not be put off much longer. Similarly, before Faubus, local school boards did not know what possible action they might expect from the governor; afterward they knew enough to expect considerable difficulty from the statehouse.

All seven of the cities we studied desegregated in the third, or post-massive-resistance, climate. In many ways their task was simpler than that faced by cities which acted earlier. But it was probably also more frightening. It seems safe to say that any large southern city which desegregated in the late fifties or early sixties did so in fear and trembling. These school boards could take it for granted that they were going to desegregate; the board that did not know this could be accused of extreme naivete. Their first and least difficult problem was to find ways to put off desegregation as long as possible. The best solution was simply to find the most capable lawyer and let him use all the legal tricks he could borrow or invent. The second problem was to mobilize whatever resources were necessary to develop a favorable climate for desegregation and to minimize demonstrations, violence, or bad publicity. Third, the school board members had to decide whether they were willing to be labeled integrationists; if they were not, they had to decide how they could protect themselves by expressing public disapproval of integration and at the same time not give aid and comfort to the Citizens Councils and the potential troublemakers. Finally, the school board had to decide how to prevent the intervention of the state legislature or the governor. Throughout this time, the school board's battle cry was, "Don't let Little Rock happen here."

Of course local conditions varied, so that as we look at our seven cities we can see how different elements in the formula became more or less important and how different cities took advantage of local resources. The seven cities in our sample are Miami, Florida; Jacksonville, Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; Columbus, Georgia; Montgomery, Alabama; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Miami, which was the first in this group to desegregate, did so in large part at the urging of Florida's moderate governor, LeRoy Collins. A desegregation suit had been brought against the Miami school board, but the court had not taken action at the time the board voted to desegregate. In this case, several board members made no attempt to conceal their willingness to accept integration.

In Atlanta, on the other hand, the school board and the city had to proceed with some caution, since it was not clear what the Georgia state legislature would do. However, several forces combined to protect Atlanta. The federal judge ruled that any attempt to close Atlanta's schools would require closing schools in the rest of the state. The governor agreed to appoint a commission, headed by Atlanta banker John A. Sibley, which held hearings in all parts of the state and then recommended a local option law. The mayor of Atlanta, William B. Hartsfield, also exerted influence. The school board asked for and received a year's delay in the integration plan so they might have ample time to get the state legislature to agree to stay away from Atlanta. Then a massive "educational" campaign was carried out to prepare the community for integration. As a result of all this, Atlanta desegregated peacefully and made itself a reputation as a leader in the "New South."

New Orleans, on the other hand, exploded. The school board won a nip-and-tuck race with the governor to keep the New Orleans schools open but then met a highly effective segregationist boycott of the contested schools. The difference between New Orleans and Atlanta provides the most intriguing question of this report: Why was one city peaceful and the other not? The answer does not lie in the fact that one city is in Georgia while the other is in Louisiana. To make one comparison between the two states--the University of Georgia had desegregated in January of 1961 by admitting two students in a welter of confusion and court injunctions.[11] Governor Jimmie Davis was vowing never to permit a Negro in a white school in Louisiana, but in fact Louisiana

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[11] For the University of Georgia story, see Trillin (1964a).

State University had been integrated long before he took office, and in 1960 there were 634 Negro students in the state's previously white colleges.

The second city in each state was obviously in less danger of direct state intervention, but the danger was still there. In the case of Baton Rouge, Governor Davis signed legislation enlarging the school board and then packed it with arch-segregationists. The city's moderate leadership responded by organizing an election campaign which succeeded in defeating three of the governor's men, and the school system then was able to prepare for desegregation gracefully.

Montgomery, Alabama--the capital of the Confederacy, the capital of Alabama, and the birthplace of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference--faced desegregation in 1964. Montgomery's answer was to establish a public biracial commission, which included top economic leaders and all three of the city commissioners. When the schools were desegregated, a tight police control prevented any demonstrations, and newsmen were given little more than a quick peek at the schools involved.

Columbus, Georgia, is the service city for Fort Benning. As an "impacted area," it was quietly ordered to desegregate or lose the students from the military base and the federal funds they brought. At the same time, a suit began making its way through the courts. When after three months Columbus agreed to desegregate, the city's leaders and elected officials committed themselves to maintaining law and order, and, like Montogomery, desegregation took place peacefully.

With each succeeding desegregation in a state, the chance of violence decreases. Nevertheless, preparation of the community remains necessary. Duval County (Jacksonville), Florida, the final city in our sample, has the second largest school system in the state, but it waited until nine other cities had desegregated. Then the city made only minimal preparation for peaceful desegregation. One Negro mother applied to send her child to a "cracker" elementary school; the school system attempted to dissuade her and offered to send the child into a middle-class white school; she refused and her house was later demolished by a bomb.

In this group of seven cities there is little in the way of interesting or explainable difference in the way they dealt with the decision to desegregate. None wanted to desegregate (except possibly Miami) and all did so anyway. What is interesting is that desegregation was peaceful in most of these cities, but it created intense conflict in New Orleans and some trouble in Jacksonville. In both cases, our research indicates that the cities simply did not mobilize community support for peaceful desegregation. No one wanted violence--at least no one in a responsible position--but it was impossible to prevent it. We will approach the question of why these cities had violence in three steps. First, we shall present a detailed case study of the New Orleans crisis and, while doing so, point out elements which are unique to New Orleans--or, ideally, which appear in New Orleans and Jacksonville but not in the other cities. After the case study, we will try to test our hypotheses, first by making statistical comparisons and then by examining the structure of school decision-making in the cities which escaped catastrophe.

CHAPTER II

NEW ORLEANS--THE FAILURE OF AN ELITE

Introduction

When four Negro first-graders entered two previously all-white schools in New Orleans on November 14, 1960, the reaction of extremists was so intense and went unchecked for so long that the city suffered a near catastrophe. Mobs of whites numbering in the thousands rampaged through the downtown business district hurling bricks and bottles. White children boycotted the two schools for a whole year, and for months an unruly crowd stood before the national network television cameras and cursed, shoved, stoned, and spat upon the few white children who continued to attend one of the schools. The school board members who had desegregated the schools under federal court orders were ostracized by their friends, harassed and threatened by late-night telephone calls, and addressed out of office by the state legislature. Many teachers and other school personnel went unpaid for months at a time, while the legislature held up the school funds and local banks refused to cash paychecks drawn on school funds held on deposit. Downtown hotels had excessive vacancies, and downtown department stores reported their worst business slump since the Depression. It was one of the nation's most chaotic and violent school desegregations. All this, not in some landlocked Bible-belt country town, but in the nation's second largest port, home of liberal

French Catholicism and one of America's most cosmopolitan cities, thronged with tourists and businessmen from all over the world--cultured, civilized, heterogeneous New Orleans.

In February, 1959, about eighteen months before the New Orleans school crisis of 1960, Helen Fuller (1959, pp. 14-17) wrote in the New Republic that the South had good reason to fear New Orleans "as a chink in the wall of 'states' rights' defiance of the Supreme Court." For many reasons--the long history of racial mixture in the city, the absence of tight residential segregation, the Catholic rather than Protestant culture--New Orleans could be expected to be a leader in the peaceful integration of the South. But looking at New Orleans in February of 1959, Miss Fuller found a surprising "stillness." No leadership for moderation had emerged.

> There is no organized effort--as in Atlanta--to encourage people to think in advance of what the loss of the public schools would mean to them and to make their views known. . . . There is no organized defense of the schools by Protestant clergy or professional men and women, and most Negro leaders in New Orleans seem more interested in their personal political organizations than in matters of principle. The press--an anemic force in New Orleans life--gives its readers no hint that there is cause for concern about the future of the schools.

Miss Fuller nevertheless saw hope for New Orleans. Her hope--and the hope of New Orleans moderates--was pinned to the "enlightened self-interest" of the power structure of the city.

> Only the "power structure" of New Orleans business and finance appears to be beyond reach of the WCC. They have no congregations or clients to consult or fear, and their main preoccupation is to keep New Orleans the flourishing center of a growing state.

> The forward-looking "reform" mayor, deLesseps S. Morrison, whom they have kept in office for 13 years, looks coldly on anything that might sully the image of the modern progressive city he has helped create. The mayor, the chief of police, and the superintendent of schools are determined that there will be no mob rule in New Orleans. (The police have been professionalized under Mayor Morrison: the assistant chief says in cases of violence his force is trained to crack skulls, no matter what color.) And past experience indicates that coordination between city officials and the judiciary is such that they will succeed in keeping the peace--when and if desegregation of the schools is ordered.

Miss Fuller's analysis is quoted here because it expresses the conviction of most thoughtful observers of New Orleans in the 1950's. Mayor deLesseps ("Chep") Morrison, Time magazine's "Most Progressive Mayor of the Decade, 1940-1950," had built an image of New Orleans as a progressive city, gradually improving the condition of the Negro while consolidating the gains of the prosperous and conservative businessmen. Most observers felt that these business and financial leaders could be expected to prevent any disruption of the flourishing business of the city.

But as desegregation day drew near, the mayor and the business leaders did nothing. In May of 1960, four months before desegregation, an editorial by television station WDSU in New Orleans (New York Times, 1960a) stated: "It seems as if most community leaders are trying to look the other way. Few people want to talk about it. Newspapers play it down. . . . It seems to us that New Orleans is drifting in an atmosphere of unreality toward a catastrophe, which if it occurs, could seriously hurt the city." When serious trouble began to occur, Mayor Morrison did virtually nothing to prevent violence or to provide leadership for moderation. For a time, it looked as if New Orleans might not have any public schools. The economic elite, who had so much at stake, refused to support the school board or even to appeal for law and order. In this almost total vacuum of leadership, the federal court managed to save the public school system, but the segregationist mobs did bring catastrophe to New Orleans.

The Background: Reform Politics

Because of Louisiana's state constitution, New Orleans has long been vulnerable to depredations by the governor and the legislature. As a consequence, the political leaders of New Orleans constantly try to protect themselves by forging alliances with the governor, and local affairs are always being dragged into state politics. When it has suited the convenience of the governor, he has formed his own New Orleans organization, as Governor Huey Long did in 1930. He formed the Louisiana Democratic Association, with Robert Maestri, who had saved Long from impeachment in 1929, as its local boss. At first the Association worked with the regular organization, the Choctaws, but by 1934 the alliance was over and Huey had declared war on the Choctaws and the city administration. "War" is the correct word.

In 1935, Governor Allen--Huey's man in office[1]--sent the National Guard into New Orleans and seized the offices of the city's voter registrar. After safely getting Long's state candidates elected, the Guard retired from the city. Next, the legislature enacted laws designed to impair the fiscal solvency of New Orleans and bring it to heel. City license fees were kept by the state, and New Orleans was prevented from borrowing in anticipation of its 1935 taxes. In 1935, the state took over supervisory control of the city's finances, and the city was pushed to the brink of bankruptcy.

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[1] In Louisiana the governor cannot succeed himself in office.

In the winter of 1935-36, Longite Governer-elect Richard Leche let it be known he would like to grant New Orleans the right to govern itself, but not if it meant strengthening the hands of the Choctaws and Mayor Walmsley. In March, 1936, Walmsley, taking the hint, announced that if he were the obstacle, he would resign, but only if local government would be restored to the city and the choice of his successor would be put to a vote of the people. Two days later, Maestri, Governor Leche, and the president of the New Orleans dock board (appointed by the governor) met in Hot Springs, Arkansas, to decide who should succeed Walmsley.

They chose Maestri. No one dared (or wanted) to oppose him, and on August 17, 1936, Maestri was declared mayor without the formality of an election. In return for this favor, state aid was returned, and a spurious form of self-government was entrusted to New Orleans. Control over local taxes, license fees, and city departments was quickly returned to the city and the Choctaws, but the legislature revamped the city's charter (without submitting the revisions to the electorate), giving Maestri almost absolute authority over the city government and patronage. This control was so extensive that Maestri took over the Choctaw organization. To complete the conquest of the city, Leche's legislature enacted a constitutional amendment eliminating the New Orleans mayoralty election for 1938. Thus Maestri would not have to stand for election until 1942.

The enemy now controlled the city. And the obvious question to ask is what the business leaders--the natural enemies of the Long faction--were doing and saying about all this. The conservative New Orleans Times-Picayune put Walmsley's promise to resign on the front page but made no editorial comment.

The editorial cartoon for that day dealt with a proposal to build a memorial to the Battle of New Orleans and Old Hickory. The next day's cartoon welcomed a surgeon's convention to the city. The day after the three men met in Arkansas to select the city's next mayor there was still no editorial, and the cartoon showed a man and wife giving old clothes to the needy. At the end of June, Walmsley resigned, and the Times-Picayune and the Item praised his wise self-sacrifice, attacked the Choctaws (the traditional spokesmen for the conservative businessmen), and glowed over Leche's friendly gesture in promising to restore self-government to the city. There was no outcry or organized activity by the city's economic leadership.

Maestri ran a corrupt administration and kept a tight grip on the city, even to the point of turning out a majority vote for Earl Long in New Orleans in 1940 while Long campaigned against the city. Maestri's power sprang from three sources: exclusive control of patronage, support from the state-wide Long faction, and the support of organized gambling. The first source got out the vote, the second provided the supportive and protective legislation, and the third provided the muscle and the money.

Maestri won easily in 1942, and in 1946 he was again considered a certain victor. But the ten years of his corruption had aroused the anger of many upper-middle-class people. In 1945 they cast about for a candidate and chose a professional politician named J. O. Fernandez, but only six weeks before the primary, Fernandez announced that he was supporting Maestri. The independents asked Colonel deLesseps Morrison, still in his army uniform, to run, and he agreed. (He was not a first choice; a dozen other men had refused.) Morrison was only 34, had a good war record, was handsome, Catholic, and had served two terms as an anti-Long state representative before the war. Though he was the scion of a 150-year-old Creole family and came from the uptown silk-stocking section, Morrison had somewhat of a playboy reputation. No one expected him to beat Maestri.

But no one knew what the women of New Orleans could accomplish. A group of women worked so hard for Chep Morrison--with door-to-door canvassing and their famous march down Canal Street with brooms "sweeping out corruption"--that Morrison surprised everyone and upset Maestri. Maestri told reporters, "Them widow women beat me."

Encouraged by their success, the women (known by then as "The Girls" turned their reformist zeal to the public schools. There, a highly politically influenced school board had let a weak school system deteriorate. The school board had become little more than a job disbursement agency for Maestri: all jobs, from principals to janitors, were distributed as patronage. In 1948, there was one maintenance worker for every 439 students in the New Orleans schools. In Philadelphia the ratio was 1 to 783; in Cincinnati, 1 to 1,255; in Baltimore, 1 to 1,760; and in New York, 1 to 3,950. Despite the huge maintenance force, many school buildings were in such a state of disrepair that they were condemned by the state fire marshal, and an independent study in 1948 rated 37 per cent of the white and 84 per cent of the Negro elementary schools unfit for use.

The Girls decided to reform the schools by "taking the school board out of politics." New Orleans is a city of clubs, from purely social clubs to the city-wide civic-interest organizations. In the Morrison campaign of 1946, virtually all the women's clubs participated, and afterward the leaders of that campaign organized and called themselves the Independent Women's Organization (IWO). The most politically astute and the most powerful of the women became leaders in IWO and were able to command rather large followings, especially on an issue so appealing to women as reforming the schools.

In 1948, the Girls could not find a man willing to run for the single opening on the school board.[2] The economic leaders said--as they said in the thirties and as they were to say again in 1960--that their businesses were too sensitive to allow them to take part in controversial issues. So one of the Girls--Mrs. Jacqueline Leonhard--made the race. She was a most atypical New Orleans citizen. Not a native of New Orleans, she had a gold tooth in the front of her mouth, was part Indian, divorced, pro-labor, and pro-Negro. Her liberalism made her an anomaly among the Girls. As is typical of reform groups, the Girls are more interested in the structure of government--eliminating corruption, instituting civil service, finding well-qualified candidates, and "removing the school board from politics"--than in the content of the government's policy. The Girls are not a liberal bloc; they represent a range of political opinions, including many who were for Goldwater in 1964. Very few of its members are liberals. But New Orleans women do not ordinarily run for political office. Only an unorthodox woman would have done it in 1948. Mrs. Leonhard did and won, and the reform of the school board had begun.

Two years later, the Girls induced two men to run for the board: one was Dr. Clarence Scheps of Tulane, and the other was a young engineer named Paul Besse. Making an estimated 60,000 phone calls during that campaign, the Girls were again successful. With a three-to-two majority, the reformers immediately elected Mrs. Leonhard president of the board. Two years later, in 1952, they captured the remaining two seats by running what they called "young independents," Theodore Shepard and Emile Wagner. By 1954, Mrs. Leonhard's unorthodoxy had made too many enemies, and she was defeated by Matthew Sutherland, a man supported by many of the Girls. The sloughing-off of Mrs. Leonhard indicated that the reform movement had "gone respectable." In 1956, the Girls elected Louis Riecke and Lloyd Rittiner. Shepard, Wagner, Sutherland, Riecke, and Rittiner--young, honest, nonpolitical businessmen, but not members of the economic elite--these were the school board members who had to cope with the desegregation crisis of 1960.

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[2] The board is composed of five members serving staggered six-year terms. Every two years, either one or two board members are elected, depending on whether the terms of one member or two members expire at that time.

The mayor during the 1960 crisis was still the man elected in 1946--Chep Morrison. Morrison took office pledging to give New Orleans an honest reputation and to have his city outstrip Miami as the "gateway to Latin America." During his first year in office he made three trips to Latin America and visited twenty countries. In his first six years he made twelve such sales trips, opening up the equivalent of consular offices in Latin American countries. Civic and business leaders formed a group called Greater New Orleans, Inc., and launched an advertising campaign to attract industry to the city. They worked well together and Morrison and the businessmen became good friends. In 1947 one of Morrison's favorite projects came about: a twenty-acre Foreign Trade Zone, a free port. Argentina immediately announced it would spend $200 million in New Orleans on processing and storage plants. In 1948, businessmen gave $100,000--and the Pan-American Life Insurance Co. loaned the city $750,000--to build the Pan-American Mart, another attraction for the city's port users.

These moves seemed to pay off. The port, which ranked sixteenth in the country in dollar volume of imports and exports after World War I, became the nation's second busiest port by 1948. But the port was not the only part of New Orleans' growth. In 1951 more than $200 million worth of new industry moved into the area, and in 1952, another $150 million worth moved in.

Morrison also led the way for some huge public works. A multimillion-dollar railroad-consolidation program was effected, underpasses were eliminated, and a $15 million railroad terminal constructed. Boulevards were widened and some slums cleared out long before the federal urban renewal program began. On the cleared land, a $20 million civic center was put up.

Morrison lived up to the expectations of the reformers and achieved some structural changes in the government. He selected a nonpartisan commission of civic leaders to prepare a new charter for the city. Their efforts won for the city a "home rule" charter which replaced the mayor-commission form of government with the mayor-council form, although it did not provide much protection from state legislative control. The charter also contained provisions which would achieve "efficiency" and "economy" and provided for two (out of seven) at-large members of the city council.

All this seems to indicate that New Orleans was by 1960 a typical "reformed" city. But this is not quite true. First, the political power had not moved into the hands of the major business leaders. The Girls were never able to interest influential businessmen in running for the school board, and the Girls remained an autonomous political movement with an extensive precinct organization. In addition, Morrison built a personal organization, the Crescent City Democratic Association, and tarnished his image as a progressive New Orleans reformer by making a run for the governor's office in 1956. Reform never became institutionalized, so that when Morrison did leave office in 1961, the city council was able to appoint a "regular" Democrat, who in turn was able to defeat the reform candidate in 1962.

The economic development of New Orleans also stalled in the late 1950's. The port was still thriving, but major corporations were moving out of the city.

Greater New Orleans, Inc., declined in influence and became a typical public-relations unit for the city. International House, which was built in the late 1940's to bring the shippers together and facilitate the operation of the port, became nothing more than a social club for third-generation wealth. In 1958, 1959, and 1960, not one major industry moved into New Orleans.

The Integration Order

Legal efforts to desegregate the New Orleans public schools began when the NAACP filed suit against the Orleans Parish[3] school board in September, 1952, but the suit lay dormant until after the second ("all deliberate speed") decision in the school desegregation cases (Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, 1955). In February, 1956, in the first of the many decisions in the case (it reached the U.S. Supreme Court six times), a three-judge United States District Court in New Orleans held that the provisions in the Louisiana constitution and statutes which required or permitted segregation of the races in public schools were invalid under the Brown decision. On that day Federal District Judge J. Skelly Wright, one of the most famous of the liberals in the southern district courts, enjoined the Orleans Parish school board "from requiring and permitting segregation of the races in any school under their supervision" and directed the board to "make arrangements for admission of children . . . on a racially nondiscriminatory basis with all deliberate speed . . ." (Bush v. Orleans Parish School Board. 1956)

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[3] The parish in Louisiana is the geopolitical area known as the county in most other states. Geographically, Orleans Parish and the city of New Orleans are identical. Historically, the two units had different political functions, and though the two were consolidated in 1870, some functions are still distinct. For example, the school board is a parish board responsible directly to the state, not to the mayor of the city.

The school board's response to this order was a determination to use "every legal and honorable means" to maintain segregation. One member, Dr. Clarence Scheps, Tulane University's comptroller, was asked if the board was making plans for eventual integration in case the Supreme Court upheld Wright's decree. Dr. Scheps replied, "Absolutely not. We will not integrate. We couldn't integrate even if we wanted to" (Dolcher, 1956).

At this point, the school board's attorney, Sam Rosenberg, told the board members that the law was clearly against them. "As a lawyer," he told an interviewer, "I could not argue against the Brown case." Since the school board seemed determined to fight integration, Mr. Rosenberg asked the board to relieve him of the task of arguing the Bush case. Accordingly, the board retained Rosenberg as its general counsel but hired Gerard Rault, a former assistant attorney general for the state, to handle the desegregation case at a yearly salary of $25,000 ($10,000 of which was paid by the state of Louisiana). Rault was an apt choice for this job, for he was the attorney for a downtown savings and loan association whose president, Emile Wagner, Jr., was a school board member and one of the most fervent segregationists in the city. Rault and Wagner were also close personal friends.

A series of appeals by Rault kept the case in the courts for the next few years. Finally, the plaintiffs (who had not been particularly aggressive in the case throughout these appeals) asked Judge Wright to direct the board to draw up a desegregation plan. On July 15, 1959--more than three years after he had first ordered desegregation--Wright directed the board to file a desegregation plan by March 1, 1960 (see Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959).

1959-60: The Wasted Year

The school board did not prepare a plan as they had been ordered to. Indeed, between July 15, 1959, and March 1, 1960, nothing happened to suggest that anyone believed the New Orleans schools would ever be desegregated. The entire state government--Governor Davis, the attorney general, the state commissioner of education, and the state legislature--had made it clear that they would do their utmost to preserve segregation, even if the only way was to close the Orleans Parish schools. Previous state administrations had provided them with some potent weapons.

In 1954 the state had adopted a constitutional amendment requiring segregation in the schools. In 1956 the legislature provided for the removal of principals and superintendents who aided desegregation, lifted the requirement of compulsory attendance at desegregated schools, provided for the dismissal of school-bus drivers at integrated schools, and provided for the dismissal of any state employees--including teachers--who advocated integration. In 1958 the legislature authorized the closing of desegregated schools and the transfer of property of such schools to private, nonsectarian schools.

The five members of the school board were thus caught neatly between the federal laws and courts and the state government. In this dilemma, only Emile Wagner and attorney Rault had an easy decision--they would continue working against Wright's order. Wagner, an organizer of the New Orleans White Citizens Council, fed information he thought might be useful to the Council and drafted some of the laws by which the legislature tried to take over control of the New Orleans school board. Rault continued to work in the courts alongside the state attorney general. But for the other members of the school board the choice was not so clear. These four men--Matthew Sutherland, Louis Riecke, Theodore Shepard, and Lloyd Rittiner, the president of the board--had disapproved of integration, and Rittiner had briefly been a member of a White Citizens Council. Yet these were respectable middle-class businessmen who, along with Wagner, had been recruited by the reform faction. They wanted to do what was "right." Yet to do what was "right" meant to go against intensely held local customs, customs to which they themselves subscribed. Since virtually all the evasive statutes passed by the legislature had been struck down by the federal courts, it was clear that the alternative to integration was the closing of the schools. Not one of these four men ever contemplated closing the schools, but two of them did seriously contemplate escaping the dilemma by resigning.

Mayor Morrison said nothing publicly. Privately, he indicated he would have nothing to do with the school desegregation controversy. He had nearly been elected governor in 1960 and wanted to run again in 1964. To do so, he would need the votes of many segregationists. The most influential businessmen--all natives of New Orleans who strongly believed in segregation--were likewise silent. They were "out" to anyone who wanted to talk to them about the schools. Television station WDSU was a voice in the wilderness, but the dominant paper, the _Times-Picayune_, provided editorials like this (_Times-Picayune_, 1960_b_) as late as six weeks before school was to open:

> Public education unquestionably, is a foundation of democracy, but whether public education, can survive the forced integration of schools in a community like ours, with a large Negro population and ingrained customs, remains to be seen. Forced integration . . . is a tragedy, just as closing of the schools would be a tragedy.

Admitting that the choices facing the community were, unfortunately, either token integration or no schools at all, the Times-Picayune (1960b) refused to take a stand:

> The choice as to whether closed schools are to be preferred to integrated schools is one which the people themselves must make. We would not presume to make it for them.

The school board had also considered the idea of letting the parents decide whether they wanted to retain public schools. The president of the board, Lloyd Rittiner, believed the board's job would be made easier if it could be shown that a majority of New Orleans parents would rather have token integration than have no schools at all. If this could be shown (and he was certain it could) it would be easier to draw Mayor Morrison into support of the board. With this in mind, Rittiner persuaded the rest of the board and the superintendent to conduct a poll of the parents and received from Judge Wright a delay, until March 17, in the deadline for submitting a plan. On April 22, a letter was sent to the parent or guardian of every pupil asking them to check their preference between the following alternatives:

> 1. I would like to see the schools kept open even though a small amount of integration is necessary.
> 2. I would like to see the schools closed rather than be integrated even in small amounts.

The emphasis on the "small amount" of integration and the use of the phrase "I would like to see the schools closed" were apparently attempts to load the questions in favor of the first alternative, but apparently the silence in the city made desegregation seem like something in the distant and unforeseeable future. Within two weeks of the mailout, almost 64 per cent of the white parents responded. To everyone's astonishment, almost 82 per cent of the white parents voted to close the schools. The results were announced on May 8, just seven days before the board was due to present a plan to Judge Wright. Rittiner, who had said before the tabulation that the poll would "wake up the people to the problem they face," was so stunned by the results that he now said he would disregard the Negroes' ballots (which were overwhelmingly in favor of keeping the schools open) and "abide by the wishes of the white people because they are the people who support the school system and elect us to the School Board" (New York Times, 1960b).

With the white parents seemingly eager to close down the schools, and with the mayor and the business elite offering the board no support, the beleaguered board members found themselves even more stranded when the expected moral example of the Catholic Church never materialized. A full year later, when the public school board was doggedly trying to keep its schools open, the Church was still in retreat before the pressures of the segregationists. Everyone had expected the Church to pave the way for community acceptance of desegregation, and indeed, the New Orleans hierarchy gave early signs of providing the necessary leadership. New Orleans, approximately two-thirds of whose population is Catholic, has by far the largest Catholic diocese in the South; in fact, half the total number of Catholics in the entire South live in the archdiocese of New Orleans. The diocese had the reputation of being one of the most liberal on race relations, a reputation that was due largely to the statements and actions of its archbishop, Joseph Francis Rummel. As early as 1949, Rummel had canceled a Holy Hour service because the religious procession would be segregated. That same year, he had ordered the "white" and "colored" signs removed from pews in the churches. In a pastoral letter in 1953, the archbishop had written: "Let there be no further discrimination or segregation in the pews, at the Communion rail, at the confessional and in parish meetings, just as there will be no segregation in the kingdom of heaven . . ." (Peters, 1959, p. 106). None of these early steps aroused any significant opposition.

Then, on the Sunday following Judge Wright's February 15, 1956, ruling that the Orleans Parish public schools would have to be integrated, Archbishop Rummel announced in a pastoral letter to the 525,000 Catholics of his diocese: "Racial segregation is morally wrong and sinful because it is a denial of the unity and solidarity of the human race as conceived by God in the creation of man in Adam and Eve." This time, there was considerable opposition. Some priests refused to read this pastoral letter, and that night a cross was burned on the lawn of Rummel's residence. Several legislators, some of them Catholic, spoke of giving the state police power to keep the parochial schools segregated. When on July 31, 1956, Rummel announced that racial integration of the parochial schools on a grade-per-year basis would begin in September, 1957, the reaction from his parishioners was swift and overwhelming. Rummel's rectory was picketed by parishioners carrying signs proclaiming the connection between integration, communism, and atheism. Contributions to the Church declined seriously, and pledges for capital projects were not honored. A group that called itself the Association of Catholic Laymen, led by Emile Wagner of the school board, appealed on August 8, 1957, directly to Pope Pius XII to overrule Rummel's pronouncement on segregation. (The group received a stern rebuke from "a high Church authority" in the Vatican newspaper for its "doctrinal error" and its "breach of discipline.") Despite the support from above, the pressures from below proved too much, for when September of 1957 arrived, the parochial schools remained segregated and the archbishop was silent. In fact, from July 31 of 1956 until July of 1959

Rummel made no further public statements on the subject of segregation. According to one unverified account, Rummel's long silence was in part due to his advisors having persuaded him that his pronouncements had gone beyond the demands of the Negroes. As evidence, his advisors are said to have pointed to the silence of the Negro community in New Orleans and to the lack of initiative by the Negro attorneys in the Bush case.

Finally, in July of 1959, Rummel, still retreating but trying to find some place to draw the line, announced rather lamely that the parochial schools would be integrated "at the earliest possible opportunity and definitely not later than when the public schools are integrated." But when the date for public school desegregation arrived, the parochial schools had once again put off desegregation. On October 9 eighty-three-year-old Rummel fell and broke an arm and a leg, and a triumvirate acting in his absence had no stomach for a fight against the segregationists. The parochial schools were not integrated until 1962, two years after the public schools.

In 1959 Msgr. Henry C. Bezou, superintendent of the parochial school system, said: "Segregation in the parochial schools can be ended with the stroke of a pen. The Archbishop of San Antonio did it [in 1954]. . .And it will happen here." The Bishop of Raleigh, North Carolina, also did it in 1954, before the Supreme Court decision and despite virulent protests. Raleigh showed that it could be done "with a stroke of a pen" if the hierarchy was willing to fight it out.

With the political and economic powers silent and the church in retreat, the four moderates on the school board were left to face the harassment of the governor, the legislature, and the state attorney general and the vituperation of the White Citizens Council virtually alone. Eight years had elapsed since the initial filing of the suit by the Negro plaintiffs, four years since Judge Wright directed the school board to begin making arrangements for desegregating the schools, and nine months since Judge Wright ordered the board to file a plan. Yet, unlike Atlanta, which was under less pressure but was already building public support for acceptance, New Orleans had not one white moderate group publicly supporting school desegregation. Since 1954, a few groups had tried but had failed even to promote a discussion of the issue. In 1958, a rabbi with a well-to-do congregation had organized an interfaith group of clergy to study race relations, but Jews were "suspect" on the issue and the group quickly collapsed. The Catholic hierarchy backed the efforts of another organization but this effort failed because the group was labelled "integrationist."

Another obstacle to "moderate" activity in New Orleans was the "communism" charge. The Southern Conference Educational Fund, an anti-segregation organization with headquarters in New Orleans, decided in 1955 to hold a forum on school integration. When they found one hundred sponsors, Mayor Morrison agreed to proclaim December 10-15, 1955, Human Rights Week, and the school board granted permission for use of a school auditorium. But at the last moment the Young Men's Business Club passed a resolution urging a boycott of the forum because the leaders of SCEF were Communist. The school board rescinded its permission for use of the auditorium, and the mayor refused to proclaim Human Rights Week. When the respectability of the sponsors--mainly social workers and professors--was pointed out to the board, the school board offered to let the sponsors hold the meeting if they did not connect themselves with SCEF. The sponsors accepted this offer; the school board stalled, forced a postponement, and finally yielded. Nevertheless, the "communism" charge had severely jolted the sponsors and discouraged attendance at future forums, and the group eventually dissolved.

Another group, calling itself SOS (Save Our Schools), organized in 1959 but kept itself hidden until the announcement of the school board's postcard poll in April of 1960. SOS was immediately stigmatized as "radical" and "integrationist" because it was made up of the same people who had organized the earlier forum. SOS was composed of social workers, Tulane professors and their wives, and some lawyers and businessmen. No one in SOS was in the economic elite of the city, and SOS was full of Jews, integrationist Catholics and nonsoutherners. Hence they were unable to attract the moderates of the city even though SOS strategy wisely emphasized open schools rather than integrated schools.

If the voices of moderation were silent, the voices of diehard segregationism were plainly heard. The White Citizens Councils were organized by 1956. Besides holding mass rallies, the Councils were suspected of being the instigators if not the perpetrators of the endless obscene and threatening telephone calls to the board members and other moderates throughout each night.

There were, in addition, the words and actions of the governor and the legislature, clearly hostile to any position short of diehard segregation. The position taken by the governor and his legislature were very largely determined during the elections in December of 1959 and January of 1960, elections held while the school board was under orders to produce a desegregation plan. The campaign was not one to give heart to the moderates or the school board. For the first time in over thirty years, the campaign for the governorship centered on racial issues. Ever since the rise of Huey Long in 1928, Louisiana state political campaigns, though one-party in name, were fought out along bifactional lines. The well-organized Long faction ran on an agrarian welfare-state program; the more amorphous anti-Long faction was a loose alliance of urban upper classes and rural planters who campaigned for "good government," i.e., "sound administration," a favorable atmosphere for business, and economy in government (see Key, 1949; Sindler, 1956; Havard et al., 1960). But in the campaign for the first primary election (held December 5, 1959), the issue of racial segregation was forced into prominence by one of the eleven candidates, State Senator William Rainach. For six years Rainach had served as chairman of the legislature's Joint Committee on Segregation, and was one of the principal architects of the edifice the state had built to preserve segregation. Rainach discarded his attachment to Longist programs and campaigned on an extreme segregation program, branding all the other candidates "soft" on this issue. (School board member Wagner campaigned actively for Rainach.) Mayor Morrison led the others with 33 per cent of the vote; Jimmie ("You Are My Sunshine") Davis had 25 per cent; Rainach 17 per cent, and the other candidates split the remaining 25 per cent. Clearly Rainach and his followers could have a lot to say about which candidate was to win in the runoff election. Davis, a member of the anti-Long faction, had sung his way to a previous term as governor (1944-48) on an apolitical campaign of "peace and harmony" for friend and foe alike (See Sindler, 1956). Morrison had a solid base of support among the Negro voters of New Orleans and had thereby incurred the wrath of white supremacists ("A vote for Morrison is a vote for integration"). Both began to bid openly for the Rainach voters. The runoff was unique in another respect; it was the first since Huey Long's election in 1928 in which no representative from either the Long or the anti-Long faction was in the race. The principal Long candidate, James Noe, finished fourth; Davis always appealed for cross-factional support, and Morrison was a loner who, despite his connection with the "good government" movement and thus with anti-Longism, had also built a base of support independent of either wing of the party. Thus the relatively stable bifactionalism of the past thirty years was obliterated, and the two candidates had little to offer the voter except to outpromise one another on "streamlining the government" and preserving segregation. In view of Morrison's record as a racial progressive, his effort to lure segregationist support was hopeless. Davis won easily, polling 54.1 per cent of the vote. The moderates in New Orleans--Morrison's personal friends--were treated to the disheartening spectacle of their good-government, reform mayor stumping the state for the votes of the segregationists while his city's school board was under court order to come up with a desegregation plan.

This should make clear the environment within which the four moderate segregationists on the school board were operating. Little wonder, then, that the board finally told Judge Wright in May of 1960 that they had no plan for desegregating the public schools. Viewed in its context, their statement can be seen as a moderate position; that is, it stopped short of refusing outright to come up with a plan. It was an admission of helplessness and a call for help. Help came from Judge Wright; he provided a plan himself, relieving the board members of the onus of having taken any initiative toward integration.[4]

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[4] See Race Relations Law Reporter (1960). This was the first court-initiated integration plan in the United States.

Summer, 1960: The Crisis Brews

But help would also have to come from the community. SOS came out publicly for open schools in late April of 1960, but this was expected from the "radical" SOS. What was needed was a statement by the mayor or by the economic elite, or, if these were not forthcoming, from a group of respected non-liberals. On June 1, the city-wide PTA did come up with a resolution in support of keeping the schools open, but this was apparently a meeting dominated by liberals. A week later, at a meeting which drew a great deal of advance publicity, the open-schools resolution was voided and all school PTA's which persisted in supporting the resolution were threatened with expulsion. Five weeks rolled by without any help in sight. The feeling of helplessness that gripped the board was well illustrated in a desperate move they made at a school board meeting on June 20. By a vote of four to one, they passed a resolution asking Governor Davis to interpose the sovereignty of the state to prevent integration. Surprisingly, Emile Wagner was the dissenter. Interposition, which Wagner was later to herald as an easy way to keep the schools open and segregated, he now called "just about the harshest remedy that could ever be called into play . . . . The board has not completely exhausted other methods open to it" (Times-Picayune, 1960a). Rittiner agreed with Wagner "that calling on the Governor is a drastic measure, but I think the people of Orleans parish should know what is ahead" (Times Picayune, 1960a). The motion was proposed by Shepard as a way of keeping the schools open on a segregated basis. Sutherland supported it, saying that after six years of fighting integration they were running out of rope. After voting for the resolution, he added that if interposition failed, they would have to integrate or close the schools.

The first break in the wall of silence came two days later on June 22, when a new group was formed--the Committee for Public Education (CPE). Like the SOS members, CPE's members were doctors, lawyers, and young executives and their wives, but unlike SOS, CPE saw to it that none of its members had a liberal reputation. Indeed, CPE leaders made it clear that they disapproved of SOS. CPE was precisely the answer to the school board's prayers so much so that it seems likely that either members of the school board, Sam Rosenberg, or Judge Wright himself were involved in organizing it. Some of the organizing of CPE was probably also done by the leaders of the Independent Women's Organization--the group which led the fight to reform the board.

During the tense months of May and June, school board members Riecke, Sutherland, and Shepard had had their fill, but Lloyd Rittiner rallied them and kept them from resigning. Rittiner's strength was partly derived from the fact that he had already made up his mind to support open schools; the others were still ambivalent. The formation of the CPE helped the other three moderates decide to stay and fight to keep the schools open.

The public stance of the CPE apparently gave heart to other moderates as well, for very shortly afterward the Episcopal clergy of New Orleans, the clergy of the United Church of Christ, and the pastors and elders from each of the forty-three Methodist churches in the New Orleans area all came out for open schools (see Breed, 1965, p. 136). The arrival of the new voices and others that followed in the summer helped to stiffen the resolve of the four school board members, but the support they most desperately wanted--from the mayor and the civic elite--never came. Their silence continued until months after the mob scenes began.

The summer of 1960 consisted of a running battle between the federal courts and the state of Louisiana. The legislature had already passed a host of bills to close the schools if necessary to preserve segregation. As Judge Wright put pressure on the school board to comply with his desegregation order, the legislature stepped up its own campaign at its regular session in 1960. One bill prohibited the granting of school funds to desegregated schools. Another gave the governor the right to close all the schools in the state if any one of them were integrated. A third gave the governor the right to close any school threatened with violence or disorder. The closest the legislature came to subtlety was Act 496, which laid out a procedure for integration: a school district could be integrated but not by its school board. When a district receives a court order, "the Governor . . . shall supersede such school board . . . , and shall take over . . . the exclusive control, management and administration of the public schools . . . on a racially segregated basis until such time as the legislature shall . . . place into operation therein a plan of racial integration."

Armed with these statutes, State Attorney General Jack P. F. Gremillion filed suit against the school board in a state court. On July 29, the state court issued the requested injunction (State of Louisiana v. Orleans Parish School Board, 1960) against the school board to prevent it from integrating, basing its injunction largely on Act 496 of 1960. The issuing of this injunction made it clear that the only way the school board could avoid being caught between the state and federal laws was to keep the schools closed.

On August 13, Mayor Morrison, under increasing pressure from his friends and supporters to do something, finally uttered his first words on the subject, a tepid request that Governor Davis disclose how he would carry out his pledge to keep the schools open and segregated. "The human and economic effects of closed public schools," Morrison told the governor, "could have a heavy impact on the community well-being" (New York Times, 1960c). And a few weeks before school opened, Morrison came out-more or less--for acceptance of integration: "If we are going to lose the decision, inevitably, a small percentage of integration might be the answer in the situation instead of having lots of trouble and lots of mixing" (Times-Picayune, 1960c). Governor Davis responded to this plea on August 17 with the following notice to School Superintendent James Redmond:

> By Executive Order Number I . . . I have superseded the Orleans Parish School Board and have in my executive capacity as Governor. . . assumed exclusive control, management and administration of all the public schools in the Parish of Orleans . . . [as authorized by Act 496 of 1960].

The notice ordered Superintendent Redmond to open the schools on September 7 on a segregated basis.

The same day Governor Davis took over the New Orleans schools, a totally new aspect was given to the entire legal and political situation. Thirty white parents filed a new suit against Governor Davis and other state officials. Like the Bush suit, it was an application for a temporary injunction restraining the governor and other state officials from obeying the state court injunction and the state statues with respect to segregation.[5] The stated fear of the white parents was that, though the governor's notice to Redmond had specifically ordered the schools to be kept open, the governor would use the authority vested in him by the various acts of the legislature to close the schools. The filing of this case, Williams v. Davis, marks the first public action taken by white parents in recognition of the danger that the state's activities posed to the schools. The CPE played a key role in instigating the suit, searching out the white parents who would be willing to put their names to it and trying to find an attorney to handle the case. After several attorneys refused (out of fear), Charles E. Richards agreed to handle the case. It must be mentioned here that many moderates were extremely fearful of harassment and even fearful for their lives; consequently, some of the important activists in CPE did their work secretly. One such person to whom we talked expressed the view, which he said was held by many in CPE, that the NAACP was deliberately "trying to lose the case" so as to force the schools to close and thus "to dramatize the issue." The white parents' suit was an attempt, not only to prevent the governor and the legislature from closing the schools, but also to keep the Negro plaintiffs from losing the case (whether by design or through ineptitude) and forcing the schools to close. Interviews with Negroes associated with the Bush case did not substantiate a "losing" strategy. Apparently what did happen was that individual Negroes had commented that if the Bush case were lost, the city would then wake up and see how important the schools were. (The CPE people also told us that some of the economic leaders rationalized their own silence by saying that the legislature should close the schools and let the citizens see how much harm would be done--then the citizens would force the opening of the schools in quick order.) The CPE members, of course, were entitled to some normal feelings of paranoia. Whether or not it was the NAACP strategy, the significance of this view, held by some key CPE leaders, is that it clearly shows that the joining of the Williams and Bush cases in no way signified cooperation between the Negro and white plaintiffs--even though the two suits ostensibly sought the same relief. At no time in New Orleans did white moderates work with the Negroes. Three days before the white parents filed their suit, a New York Times (1960c) dispatch from New Orleans quoted unidentified "sources high in legal circles" who believed NAACP's pleadings did not "provide the court with an adequate basis for cutting through the barrier thrown up by state officials." There is strong evidence that the filing of the Williams suit, which names the school board as one of the parties defendant and seeks to enjoin the board from obeying the state court injunctions, was in fact concurred in by the four moderates on the school board and given behind-the-scenes encouragement and support. This also would mean that Sam Rosenberg and even Judge Wright may have been consulted in the drafting of the Williams brief.

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[5] Because this suit sought the same relief against the same parties, the court consolidated the two cases. From that point on, the two cases are virtually synonymous, going up and down the ladder together from the district court to the U.S. Supreme Court.

On August 27 a three-judge federal district court awarded judgment for the plaintiffs in both the Bush and Williams suits (Bush v. Orleans Parish School Board; Williams v. Davis, 1960a). Two days later, the court issued a sweeping injunction, striking down the key segregation acts of the legislature, nullifying the seizure of the school board by the governor, and ordering the board to get on with the desegregation of the schools.

If the Court thought its injunction was going to dispose of the case once and for all it was sadly mistaken, for much more was yet to come, but the events of the summer, culminating in the filing of the suit by the white parents and the strong, unyielding position taken by the federal district court, placed the school board members in a strong position. The Williams suit was vital, not only because it gave Skelly Wright the grounds to strike down the state school-closing laws, but also because it legitimated the school board's now "moderate" position. By mid-August of 1960, the CPE's work convinced the board members that if the legislature, the governor, and Perez could be persuaded to keep their hands off the New Orleans school problem, the schools could be peacefully desegregated. Now, thanks to Williams, control of the schools had been returned to them. With the governor and others restrained from interfering with the schools, they were now ready to comply with Wright's orders. Accordingly, the four and Sam Rosenberg met privately at Rittiner's home and set up a Committee To Maintain Public Schools and named themselves to this committee. The purpose of this thinly disguised ruse was to permit themselves to have official meetings without having to have Emile Wagner present. They knew Wagner was relaying information to the White Citizens Councils and to the legislature. At this private meeting they asked Rosenberg what to do, and he suggested that they go to Judge Wright and tell him that they now wanted to comply with his orders.

Desegregation by Computer

The next day the four moderates met privately with Wright and told him that they and the school staff had made no plans to desegregate but were now ready to comply. The schools were scheduled to open on September 7, little more than a week away, so the board members asked the judge if he could delay the start of desegregation until November 14. The delay would give them and the school staff time to devise a desegregation plan. But two other reasons were actually more important. The delay would mean that school would open on a segregated basis; desegregation in November would be by transfer and would be simpler than desegregation on opening day. Negro students would already be registered in a school and a relatively smaller number would go to the trouble of transferring. Finally, the board wanted desegregation delayed until after the November 8 election, when Matthew Sutherland, one of the moderates, was up for reelection. This idea, like the decision in March to conduct the postcard poll of parents, was Lloyd Rittiner's. A school board election at this time would be certain to center on the stand taken by the moderates; thus it would provide a good test of voter support for open schools. Despite the results of the postcard poll and despite the still impressive silence of the community leaders, Rittiner believed that the majority of the city would support them, and even the other moderates were more confident. Sutherland had come close to resigning a few months earlier; he was now ready to stand for reelection. Another consideration in seeking the delay was to put off the desegregation until after the Presidential election, so that it would not get embroiled in the Kennedy-Nixon battle. This was strictly a minor consideration, one that we suspect the school board members thought of only afterward.

Not even Emile Wagner knew that this meeting with Judge Wright had taken place, and no one knew the real reasons for the request for a delay. On August 31, when the four members formally went before Judge Wright to request the delay, the only reason given was to allow the school staff time to prepare a desegregation plan. The delay was granted (Bush v. Orleans Parish School Board; Williams v. Davis, 1960b). Attorney Rault resigned from his position with the school board, and Sam Rosenberg became once again the school board's only attorney. During the next few months, the four moderates and Rosenberg were practically living with one another, and much of their time was spent together in Judge Wright's private chambers.

Thus it happened that the public schools of New Orleans opened their doors on the usual segregated basis on September 7, 1960. The school board had two months to prepare for the long dreaded desegregation, and they were busy months. Preparations included not only the setting-up of the machinery for selecting the Negro children and the schools, but also a feverish attempt to drum up support from the political and economic leaders of the city and to organize Sutherland's reelection campaign.

Trying to arrive at a legally acceptable way of limiting the number of Negroes who would be entering the white schools, the board and the superintendent adopted, on September 26, a four-step administrative process for considering applications for transfer. The plan, and all subsequent plans worked out by the school board and the superintendent, reflected their reform ideology; they wanted to make "objective," "scientific" decisions. "Objective" and "scientific" criteria had the further merit of freeing the board members and the superintendent from responsibility for the decisions made. To see the importance of this factor to the board members, we must keep in mind the enormous pressure on them. The four moderates had started to receive harassing phone calls from two to four in the morning. They were being referred to in the public press as the "four surrender members," and no one in a position of responsibility in the community had risen as yet to support them. Later, the board members were to deny responsibility for the details of their integration plan, both to the public and to the interviewer. More than one board member insisted: "We didn't select the schools and the children, the machine did." (In fact, it was not quite true that "the machine did it," since "the machine" had been instructed to find no more than ten qualified Negro applicants.)

A look at the plans devised by the board and the superintendent will indicate how carefully they tried to make the decisions mechanical.

Step one: Consideration by four assistant superintendents of:

Verification of information on application
Proper age (birth certificate)
Nearness of school to child's home
Request or consent of parent and reasons assigned thereto
Available room and teaching capacity of schools
Availability of transportation

If above factors were satisfactorily met, the applications were referred to the next step.

Step two: Consideration by the Acting Director of Guidance and Testing, Psychologists and Psychometrists of:

Scholastic aptitude
Intelligence or ability
Results of achievement tests

All information compiled about each applicant was referred to the third screening group.

Step three: Consideration by the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, the Director of Special Services, the Director of Kindergarten-Primary Education, Psychologists, and visiting teachers[?] of:

Effect of new pupil upon the academic program
Suitability of established curricula for pupil (in terms of grouping within the class)
Adequacy of pupil's academic preparation or readiness for admission to school or curricula
Psychological qualification of pupil for type of teaching and associations
Effect upon academic progress of other students
Effect upon prevailing academic standards
Psychological effect upon the pupil
Home environment of the pupil
Maintenance or severance of social and psychological relationships with pupils and teachers

Step four: Consideration by an administrative review team composed of the Superintendent, the First Assistant Superintendent, the Acting Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, and the school system's Medical Director of:

All information previously collected on each applicant
Choice and interests of pupil
Possibility or threat of friction or disorder among pupils or others
Possibility of breach of peace or ill will or economic retaliation within the community

All the factors in these lists were taken by the school board and the superintendent from the Louisiana Pupil Placement Act (regular session of 1960, Act 492). As can readily be seen, the Act was designed to make sure that no Negroes would be permitted to transfer. That any were permitted at all derives from the fact the board had to find some, and it indicates that there must have been some "cheating" by the "machine." The factors listed in step four leave the "objective," "mechanical" realm and begin to involve subjective considerations. However, the administrative team seems to have followed faithfully all the objective tests in the first three screenings and not followed at all the subjective tests in the fourth screening. Certainly the schools chosen for integration hardly fit the criteria suggested in step four.

Finally, the school board was to consider the findings of the administrative review team and direct the superintendent to issue or not to issue a transfer for the pupil in question. However, the issue was so hot, and the desire on the part of the board to avoid responsibility for the choices so intense, that this part of the procedure was not followed. The board members urged Redmond not to release the names of the Negro children even to themselves. Of course, they were fearful of having the information released to Emile Wagner, who would then release it to the White Citizens Councils, but the four moderates could easily have obtained the information without letting Wagner see it; they simply did not want to know which Negro children and which schools had been chosen.

The elaborate administrative procedure thus had three principal advantages for the board. (1) It greatly limited the number of Negroes and the number of schools to be integrated. (2) It was a "correct," "decent," "good" way of doing things, avoiding the subjective considerations typical of systems run by politicians. (3) It helped the board avoid personal responsibility for the decisions. The machine did it.

A total of 137 Negroes applied for permits to transfer. While the school system was receiving these transfers, the board members were actively trying to enlist the public support of the economic elite. Help in this enlistment came from an attorney who had long been the counsel for a very wealthy Jewish New Orleans family (a family which was known for its liberal proclivities but which, because Jews were suspect on the issue of segregation, had to work behind the scenes), and who had many contacts with the economic leaders of the city. At the end of September this attorney had succeeded in getting five of the very top economic leaders to meet with school board president Rittiner. They were not willing to be seen in public and met him at a private dining room. Rittiner argued, as many others had previously, that any chaos or disorder over the desegregation of the schools would be harmful to the city, and he called on these men to support publicly the board's efforts to achieve peaceful desegregation. But the business leaders replied with an ultimatum: they would offer their assistance only if the board would separate the first grades by sex and keep the toilets in the schools segregated by race. Rittiner saw nothing wrong with separating the first graders by sex--all the New Orleans schools had at one time been so divided--but he laughed at the idea of segregating the toilets. Besides the probability that such segregation would be rejected by Judge Wright, the very idea of such a condition being imposed by these particular men seemed to him simply ridiculous. The meeting ended at this point, and these men did not come out in favor of peace until several months after desegregation.

On October 10, however, in an apparent attempt to meet these business leaders halfway, the board resolved to keep all integrated classes separated by sex. Other rules adopted by the board on October 10 included a prohibition against accepting applicants with older siblings in Negro schools and a rule that all accepted applicants must have test scores equal to or above the median for the school for which they were applying. Since the latter rule was crucial in determining not only which Negro children but, more important, which of the white schools would be integrated, it is important for us to understand exactly what the school staff meant by this rule and how they administered it. It had been a long-standing practice in the New Orleans public schools to give all children, white and Negro, the Metropolitan Readiness or Achievement Tests during their first week in first grade. This test was administered by the first-grade teacher and, as a matter of course, had already been administered to all first-grade children in the first week of school in September. The class median was based on the scores at each school's first grade for the previous five years. The 129 Negro children who had applied for transfers were assigned to testing centers where they were given additional tests; these were administered by psychologists who also reported on the behavior and dress of the children and their parents.

As the reader has no doubt noted, all the rules and procedures adopted by the school board and the superintendent pertained to the screening of the Negro applicants. There was absolutely no screening of the white schools to be integrated; in fact, the choice of the white schools was to be determined by finding a school whose first-grade class median was low enough to admit the Negro children. Some people (both inside and outside the school system) urged Superintendent Redmond and the board members to select first, the schools where there would not be trouble and then find Negro pupils who could fit in. But Redmond and the board would have none of such subjective criteria. The board still insisted in 1964 that the proper educational experience for the

Negro children could best be achieved in a classroom where they would not feel inferior. In a way, their excessive concern on this point reflected the board's belief that the Negro children were really not ready for integration with white pupils. But the consequence of this was that the white schools to be integrated were the worst possible choice.

Since both schools--William Frantz Elementary and McDonogh No. 19--were in the same general neighborhood, it was easy for segregationists to concert their activity. Of course, the decision to limit it to two white schools--another decision by the machine--also made it easy for the segregationists to concentrate their fire. In addition, the neighborhood was generally poor, with a concentration of white working-class and lower-class families in housing projects, the groups most likely to be hostile to Negro advances. But Frantz and McDonogh 19 were bad choices for political reasons as well, for they were both in the most neglected section of the city, the ninth ward. The ninth ward was always the last to get street lights, the last to get paved streets, and the last to receive the myriad other city services which other sections were able to obtain more easily. Politically, socially, and economically, the city has been dominated by the Anglo-Americans, who live uptown, i.e., "above" (west of) Canal Street, and the Creole French, who live in the French Quarter. In the nineteenth century the area east of the French Quarter was the immigrant truck-gardening section of the city, composed of Germans, Italians, and non-Creole French. Though many of these people have achieved middle-class status, their section of town is still politically weak. Suddenly they discovered that two of their schools--and none in any other section of town--had been desegregated. To the residents of the ninth ward the decision seemed motivated by pure malice, and even upper-middle-class moderates were furious.

It is only necessary to add that the ninth ward of Orleans Parish is the next-door neighbor to St. Bernard Parish, which is led by arch-segregationist and racist Leander Perez, and McDonogh 19 is itself only a few blocks away from the parish line. It was thus easy for Perez to hire pickets for the two schools and to make his own schools the haven for the white boycotters.

Had the board been willing to make a "political" choice of schools rather than a "scientific" choice, much of the difficulty could have been avoided. Board members told us that this conjecture was merely hindsight, but they actually had been urged at the time to choose schools where Negro children would be likely to be accepted by the whites. The school board could easily have integrated almost any school it chose, Negroes have always lived in nearly every neighborhood of the city, even the most expensive. (One of the most militant Negro leaders of New Orleans, Mrs. Oretha Castle, lives between two ardent white segregationists.) Furthermore, in October, the PTA's of two schools in the Tulane University area actually volunteered to accept Negroes. Mrs. Mary Sand, president of SOS, said in 1961 that the open-school campaign had made little progress in the neighborhood of Frantz and McDonogh 19 "because we found few civic groups through which to work" (Third Annual Conference on Problems of Schools in Transition, 1961).

The Sutherland Campaign and the First Special Session

While the school board and the staff were developing their screening procedure, the campaign for support for open schools and for Matthew Sutherland's reelection got underway. Election day was November 8, the same day as the Kennedy-Nixon Presidential election. Of the five seats, only Matthew Sutherland's was being voted on at that time. Sutherland's reelection campaign was designed to put to the voters the stand taken by the four moderates. He would make clear that he was a segregationist but that he was going to keep the schools open even if they were desegregated. The moderates--including CPE and the now important Independent Women's Organization, which publicly came out for open schools on August 3--gave Sutherland their all-out support.

The extensive efforts to get the economic elite involved had a built-in deficiency. Who, after all, could exercise influence or exert pressure on the most powerful men in the city? The chief newspaper was published by a man who was himself a member of the great silent elite. Mayor Morrison was more vulnerable, since he had been a member of the good-government movement in New Orleans since 1936 and had thus received much political support from the people who were now appealing to him. Many of Morrison's closest friends and admirers are still bitter today over his response to their appeals. He absolutely refused to endorse Judge Wright's desegregation order or the board's decision to comply, and his few statements about the schools were ambiguous or tepid. Behind the scenes, he did contact the elites, but when they coldly rebuffed him--some refused even to discuss the subject with him, others were more polite--Morrison reportedly turned to two confidants and said, "Well, if those s.o.b.'s aren't going to do anything, I'll be damned if I'm going to stick my neck out!"

But the issue, especially as defined by CPE and SOS, could not be ignored indefinitely. SOS had first set the strategy back in April by coming out for "open schools" instead of urging integration. Observers of New Orleans have tended to minimize the contribution made by SOS because "they didn't come within a hundred miles of the power structure." But issue-defining is a key role and does affect the power structure. It was this emphasis on open schools rather than integration which permitted "respectable" elements of the community to take a public stand in support of the board for the first time. In June it was the CPE which did so. During July and August various Protestant clergymen, a few union locals, IWO, and the Junior Chamber of Commerce all came out for open schools. It must be emphasized that no white group made an effort in 1960 to win popular acceptance of Judge Wright's orders. Even those who spoke for keeping the schools open (except for SOS) stressed that they were for segregation. The school board itself did not switch from resistance to compliance until the issue changed from integrating the schools to keeping them open. The moderates were so effective in framing the issue in this way that by October the segregationists were compelled to say that what they wanted was to keep the schools segregated and open. And near the end of October the elite made their first tentative steps toward supporting peaceful desegregation.

During the month of October, reports were circulating that Governor Davis was going to call a special session to try to halt the New Orleans school desegregation. The five businessmen who had met with Rittiner in September journeyed twice to Baton Rouge to urge Davis not to interfere. They feared state interference would stir up trouble in New Orleans. These men had been important Davis supporters in the 1960 election, and Davis was aware of their economic power. They left his office under the impression that he had promised not to call a special session, but they (and others) told us that Davis never gives a direct answer to a question. They cannot be faulted for trying, but at a time when the school board was desperately in need of public support from the elite, this effort of theirs to help the board was kept a secret.

On October 27, the school board announced that it had granted transfer permits to five Negro pupils. Their names were not revealed nor were the white schools identified. (The identity of the white schools was not known until the Negro girls arrived at school on November 14.) The next day Davis issued a call for a special session. Rumors quickly swept the city that the governor was going to adopt the strategy of "legislative interposition." In view of the injunction he was under not to interfere with the public schools of New Orleans, it was thought that he would interpose the legislature between the federal government and the school board. The New Orleans moderates seized on the call for a special session as one more sign that the schools were in danger of being closed. They renewed their effort for public support and finally succeeded.

On November 1, in a front-page editorial, the Times-Picayune (1960d) endorsed the candidacy of Matthew Sutherland.

> Mr. Sutherland, in our opinion, has proved himself an ardent opponent of forced integration. He has backed every effort by the school board to have set aside court orders to end segregation. Nevertheless, opposition to Mr. Sutherland seems to be based on the school board's adoption of the state's placement law which was designed to meet the emergency that now exists. As far as we can see the board had no option. After losing some 35 appeals to the courts of one kind or another, the federal court order had to be recognized. The board wanted, of course, to keep the schools open and segregated. It has had to accept limited segregation [sic] under the pupil placement plan. It has no authority to close the schools it wanted to. The legislature and the Governor can close the schools (if the closing is applied to the whole state). But none of Mr. Sutherland's opponents. . . had a definite plan to keep them open and fully segregated.

In response to this editorial, the principal opponent of Sutherland, John Singreen, a man endorsed and supported by the White Citizens Councils, wrote a letter to the paper on November 2 (Times-Picayune, 1960e). His letter indicates how the framing of the issue in terms of closing or keeping open the schools had put the diehards on the defensive.

> The sole issue in this campaign is, are the voters willing to accept integration now, or are they going to fight now for their rights. The four surrender members of the school board have already approved integration . . . and it will be a reality on November 14 unless each parent, each voter . . . make up their minds to fight for their constitutional rights. . . .
>
> No one in official authority in Baton Rouge, nor anybody here, has mentioned closing the schools. . . .
>
> Governor Jimmie Davis was elected by the people of Louisiana to keep the schools open and segregated. The people should trust the governor and the schools will remain open and segregated, and our own. . . .

Emile Wagner, who had publicly called upon the governor to remove the four "surrender members" of the board from office, endorsed Singreen and, referring to the postcard poll of parents, declared that Sutherland had "violated this mandate of the people." (A few days later, Wagner, running as an unpledged elector in the Presidential election, called for the defeat of both Nixon and Kennedy as a way of stopping such things as the integration order. Integration, he said, would be a disaster because tests had shown "40 per cent of Negro students verged on moronic and ranged down to imbecile" (Times-Picayune, 1960n).

The two other candidates for Sutherland's seat on the school board were a young attorney named Caryl Vesy, who labeled Sutherland a defeatist for believing that the only choice was between compliance or a total loss of the school system, and Mrs. Marie McCoy, whose main campaign theme was that there should be a mother on the board. When pressed on the issue of the day, she stoutly declared that if the people wanted the schools closed, she would close them.

Sutherland persistently put to the voters the stand taken by the four moderates on the board. He reiterated his advocacy of segregation and ticked off the steps he had taken to defend the New Orleans school system from forced integration. But, he said, "we must face the issues as they are, not as we would have them to be. The question is, do we want public education or do we want economic chaos? . . . If we close the public schools, we will be depriving some of the people of an education, which is out of line with our democratic way of life" (Times-Picayune, 1960g). Seeing no other way to keep the schools open, he would comply with the federal court orders to desegregate, "but I would favor anything the legislature can do to keep the schools open and segregated" (Times-Picayune, 1960g). The last plank in this platform was a reliance on the Pupil Placement Act as a good way to limit integration. After fighting off forced integration for eight years, the board's moderates were now reluctantly going to admit a few Negro children, but only to keep the schools from being closed and only under conditions which would limit and control the number of Negroes. And if the legislature could come up with a way of keeping the schools open and segregated, they were all for it. In short, it was a tightrope act.

On November 4, the second break in the wall of silence occurred with the public endorsement of Matthew Sutherland by a committee of one-hundred important business and professional men, headed by an executive committee of eighteen of the city's most influential citizens--the economic elite, at last. The endorsement, "for the future of our children and for the continued growth of New Orleans as a major industrial center in the South," made no mention of the fatal issue except for an indirect reference to the closing of the schools: "Our struggle with the Soviet Union. . . makes it imperative that the education of our children not be stopped or interrupted . . ." (Times-Picayune, 1960f). The day before the election, this committee ran a three-quarter-page ad in the Times-Picayune (1960m) listing ninety-eight names and signed the Business and Professional Men's Committee for Sutherland. The only message on the page was: "We believe that we and our children will all have a better future if Matt Sutherland is reelected to the School Board." But the names were what was important.

On November 4, everyone finally learned the details of Davis' legislative package. As soon as the bills were distributed to the legislators, the House voted to suspend the rules and sent the bills to the administration-controlled judiciary "B" committee. Only one New Orleans representative, Maurice Landrieu, objected on the floor to suspending the rules, and he was voted down ninety-three to one. Another New Orleans representative, Salvador Anzelmo, described the administration "steamroller": "Twenty-nine bills were dumped on my desk, and within 15 minutes referred to a committee, without us having any opportunity to read or digest those bills" (Times-Picayune, 1960i). Anzelmo said many members of the House objected to the procedure but dared not speak up for fear of being branded integrationists.

Davis' package did hinge around interposition. Indeed, one bill went so far as to impose criminal penalties upon anyone, including any officer of the federal government, who attempted to interfere with the state's control of education. The rest of the legislative package was an arsenal of devices to prevent integration; their function was succinctly summarized by the three-judge federal court which ruled them unconstitutional a few weeks later (cf. Bush v. Orleans Parish School Board; Williams v. Davis; United States v. Louisiana, 1960a):

> In order to forestall any effective integration order for this school year, present enrollment on a segregated basis is "frozen" and transfers are forbidden (Act 26); but, for the future, any school under an order to desegregate is immediately closed (Act 22), whereupon the local school board ceases to exist (Act 21); to carry out these directives . . . the state police are given additional powers and placed under the orders of the legislature (Act 16), and if demonstrators are needed, they may now be recruited among the students who are no longer compelled to go to school (Act 27); to assure that an integrated school does close, the new legislation provides that if it continues to operate it shall enjoy no accreditation (Act 20), teachers shall lose their certificates (Act 23), and the students themselves shall receive no promotion or graduation credits (Act 24). . . .

The New Orleans school board was mixed in its appraisal of the package. Sutherland and Rittner said they would favor anything the legislature could do to keep schools open and segregated. "The only thing I am against," Rittiner said "is the closing of schools. As an elected official I feel it is my duty to provide public education, if possible on a segregated basis but, if not, on an integrated basis" (Times-Picayune, 1960h). Shepard was more pessimistic; the bills looked to him very similar to ones the federal courts had already declared unconstitutional. If the governor was not able to produce anything new, Shepard saw pupil placement as the best course to follow. Emile Wagner, on the other hand, professed confidence that passage of the bills would keep the schools open and segregated, and he taunted his four colleagues, "It is to be regretted that the school board did not have more confidence in the governor. If it had it would not have walked hat in hand to a federal court and capitulated so that now it is bound by its word to the court to integrate" (Times-Picayune, 1960h).

At the committee hearings, statements by administration spokesmen made it abundantly clear that they really did not know how to keep the school open and segregated and perhaps did not even know what they wanted to accomplish in the session. Representative Napper, who drafted the interposition bill, said in reply to a statement by the president of SOS, "Under no circumstances do we want to have another Little Rock in Louisiana. . . . [We] will do everything . . . to keep the schools open" (Times-Picayune, 1960j). Senator Kelly Gravolet from Perez' district expressed the same feeling when he said the session had only one purpose: to keep the schools open and segregated. "If interposition fails," he admitted, "schools will be either integrated or closed, but none of us wants them closed. We are hoping, he concluded, "to have six years more of litigation" (Times-Picayune, 1960k). However, Representative Risley Triche, Davis' floor leader in the House, blithely assured the state's parents that any pupil who did not attend school because of the school's closing would be considered by the state to have been legally attending school.

On November 6, the Louisiana House passed all twenty-nine bills, most of them by huge majorities, the interposition bill unanimously. In the Senate, the New Orleans delegation proved a little tougher, but all bills were passed in that chamber on November 8. The New Orleans Senate delegation was led by Robert Ainsworth,[6] Governor Davis' personal choice in 1960 for president pro tempore of the Senate, who bucked the administration because he felt the bills (especially Bill 18 to abolish the Orleans school board) were intended to upset responsible authority in New Orleans. Kelly Gravolet answered this charge with the following explanation: "Everybody here knows there is an injunction against the governor. If we do nothing the schools will be integrated Novermber 14. The only way I can see that we could possibly have open and segregated schools on the 14th is by passing this bill" (Pinney and Friedman, 1963, p. 10).

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[6] Ainsworth is now a federal judge in New Orleans.

Even though the legislation threatened to close the schools and was an attack on the right of New Orleans to home rule, neither Mayor Morrison nor the New Orleans deligation fought back. Only Landrieu voted against all seventeen of the bills affecting New Orleans; and only three other members opposed as many as half the bills. Morrison's two floor leaders, LeBreton and Casey, voted against only three and one, respectively. Vesich, the floor leader for the New Orleans Regular Democratic Organization, and three other delegates voted against two each; nine members of the House delegation from New Orleans supported all the bills.

However, when the legislature wanted to have an eight-man committee take over the New Orleans schools, Representative LeBreton introduced an amendment to have the committee be composed entirely of New Orleans legislators. "We've come a long way," said LeBreton," toward getting our school board out of politics. I'm against only one thing--your taking our school board away from us" (Times-Picayune, 1960l). LeBreton was put on the legislative committee, but his amendment was defeated, and this is the issue which finally stirred Mayor Morrison. On November 8, he issued a statement to the press, which read in part as follows.

> I have been shocked to learn that the House . . . rejected a proposed amendment by Orleans legislators seeking local control of its own affairs. . . .
>
> It is just as wrong for Mr. Garrett [upstate Claiborne Parish] to try to run our Orleans school affairs as it is wrong for the U.S. Supreme Court to dictate to the people of Louisiana. . . .
>
> It looks like home rule is taking another licking [Times-Picayune, 1960o).

It was stimulating to those in New Orleans to learn that Morrison could be shocked by anything that was going on in Baton Rouge. From his public statements (and the votes of his floor leaders) one would conclude that while he did not quite approve of a legislative committee's taking over the schools and closing them, he was not really outraged until he found that the Committee would be composed of upstate legislators.

In sheer voting strength, a united New Orleans delegation could easily have been outvoted, but one wonders whether Governor Davis would even have attempted to go so far had official New Orleans presented a solid front of opposition. It is one thing to knock over a few representatives obviously acting on their own, but to beat down the united opposition of the mayor of the state's largest city, his political organization, and all his state legislators would have been a different matter. Even if Davis were to win, such an encounter might have cost him more than the issue was worth. The second special session was to provide a good illustration of the power New Orleans could exert in the legislature. A bill clearly aimed at Morrison would have made mayors and police chiefs subject to removal from office if they assisted in the execution of federal court orders, e.g., by protecting children going to and from desegregated schools. In the judiciary "B" committee, Davis' forces had sufficient numbers to report any bill favorably, but this bill was attacked by mobilized New Orleans forces and was quashed in the committee.

The Louisiana Senate passed the bills and the special sessions recessed on election day, November 8--and the New Orleans voters rejected the diehard position and endorsed moderation by a wide margin. Sutherland received an outright majority (56 per cent of the vote) and nearly doubled his nearest opponent, Singreen, who got 31 per cent. This smashing victory was the first public endorsement of the school board's policy of keeping the schools open.

Desegregation Week

November 8 was also the end of the Presidential election campaign. Until now, the federal government's involvement in the school desegregation situation in Louisiana had been limited to steps taken by the courts. Political observers generally believed that President Eisenhower's Attorney General, William P. Rogers, had been eager to enter the Bush case, but that Eisenhower and Republican strategists had feared their entry into the case would raise the specter of Little Rock and cause the state to go for Kennedy (it did anyway). Rogers lost no time after the election, for on November 10, the United States District Attorney in New Orleans, M. Hepburn Many, a long-time Republican segregationist who reputedly hated Louisiana Democrats more than he hated integration, sought and obtained orders from Judge Wright restraining all Louisiana sheriffs, district attorneys, police chiefs, and mayors from interfering with federal court officers involved in school desegregation.

Thursday, November 10, was a busy day in Louisiana. On November 7, the legislature had created an eight-man legislative committee to run the New Orleans schools, and on the morning of November 10 four members of this committee arrived in the New Orleans school offices accompanied by armed state police. Risley Triche, floor leader in the House and chairman of the committee, retained Redmond as superintendent and ordered him to clear out all employees from the building. Many employees thought they had been fired. After stripping the school board of authority, Triche announced: "We are going to operate the schools the same on Monday as they are operating today. . . There will be no change. . . . We know now of no transfer of students nor recommendations for transfer which have been approved" (New York Times, 1960d).

The legislative commission retained control of the schools most of that afternoon. Within a few hours attorney Charles Richards appeared in Judge Wright's court, at the request of the white parents in the Williams case, asking for a restraining order. Having no time for a hearing, Judge Wright issued temporary restraining orders and set November 18 for a hearing on the constitutionality of the statutes passed in the special session. Deputy U.S. marshals fanned out all over the state to serve copies of the orders on state officials, including the eight-man legislative committee.

By six o'clock that evening, Sam Rosenberg was able to tell the school board that, as a result of Wright's order, they were now in a position identical to the one they were in before passage of the acts of the special session. With this assurance, the board formally authorized the transfer of the five Negro girls into all-white schools. Emile Wagner was not present; he was meeting with the state sovereignty commission in Baton Rouge to map strategy.

That night Governor Davis announced that the special session was not over; it had only recessed, and he called it to reconvene on Sunday. In addition, he called a second special session to follow the automatic termination of the first. On Saturday, State Education Superintendent Jackson declared Monday the 14th--desegregation day--a state-wide holiday, and at 10 A.M. of Sunday the 13th, Judge Wright issued restraining orders against the holiday.

As Wright was issuing the order, the legislature was reconvening. Before television cameras, it replaced the special committee to run the New Orleans schools with the entire legislature, fired Redmond and Rosenberg for refusing to identify the Negro girls, and named an assistant sargeant-at-arms to proceed to New Orleans with a "legislative police force" and prevent desegregation. The idea behind replacing the eight-man committee with the entire legislature was to make it impossible for Judge Wright to issue restraining orders, since there was no legal precedent for enjoining an entire legislature. But that evening Judge Wright, who had been taking notes in front of his television set, did issue restraining orders against all members of the legislature. Perhaps even more significant than this shattering of legal precedent is the fact that this time the restraining orders were requested by the Orleans Parish school board--the four men who in June had panicked and asked the governor to interpose state sovereignty to prevent integration. Segregationist leaders were said to have been taken by surprise and completely stymied by Wright's orders.

After Wright issued the restraining orders, Redmond called all the school principals (this was still Sunday night) and told them to open the schools on Monday and, despite the confusion, most teachers and pupils showed up for class. Not until 10 A.M. did anyone except Police Superintendent Joseph Giarrusso know which schools had been chosen. Then, four Negro girls (the fifth had withdrawn her application)--three at McDonogh 19 and one at Frantz Elementary--brought desegregation to the Deep South. It was only then that the citizens of New Orleans discovered that the two schools were in the Ninth Ward, the worst possible area in the city for such an experiment.

The Mob Is Organized

The Negro girls were escorted to school by federal marshals, and as soon as the word spread, the parents of the white pupils came running to take their children home. Every white child was withdrawn from McDonogh 19, and all white children except two were withdrawn from the Frantz school. The two exceptions were the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. James Gabrielle and the Reverend Lloyd Foreman. No white pupil ever returned to McDonogh 19, except for one brief period in January of 1961. (The father of the children who broke the boycott was then fired by Walgreen's and had to leave town when no one would hire him.) Led by the Gabrielles and Reverend Foreman, other parents brought their children back to Frantz, and the boycott of that school was never total.

On Tuesday the 15th, roving packs of truant teenagers tried to break into the two integrated schools but were repulsed by the police. Eleven arrests were made (but none of the eleven was given a jail sentence). That day the Young Men's Business Club had spoken out against the demonstrations, but at the same meeting the club voted to table a resolution expressing support of the school board. Then Governor Davis called on the people of New Orleans to stay calm. "I know feeling is running high in New Orleans," he said, "but I think it's timely. . . for me to suggest that the people restrain their emotions and above all things keep a cool head" (Times-Picayune, 1960p). That night, Willie Rainach, Leander Perez, and other segregationist leaders urged a mass rally of five thousand at the municipal auditorium to act. Rainach called for a scorched-earth policy:

> Bring the courts to their knees. . . . Let's empty the classrooms where they are integrated. A day lost can be made up; a week, a year lost is not fatal. . . . But once bloods are mixed, that is forever fatal.
>
> [Times-Picayune, 1960q].

But it remained for Leander Perez, the poet laureate of the evening, to provide the most stirring call to action. Calling for demonstrations against the NAACP, the Communists, the "Zionist Jews," Judge Wright, and "the real culprit, malefactor and double-crosser-the weasel, snake-head mayor of yours," Perez concluded:

> Don't wait for your daughter to be raped by these Congolese. Don't wait until the burr-heads are forced into your schools. Do something about it now!
>
> [Times-Picayune, 1960q]

The next day the teenagers did something about it. A mob variously estimated at between one and three thousand swept through the New Orleans Civic Center and the state supreme court building, surged into City Hall, and then marched on the federal courts and the board of education building. Some New Orleans residents have tried to play down the events of this day and were irritated when we used the word "crisis," but school board members and school staff admitted to bring genuinely frightened at the sight of the mob steaming down Carondelet Street toward them. Pinney and Friedman (1963, p. 15) quote an account in the Manchester Guardian Weekly which described the mob as "the worst gang of thugs one has ever seen, even including some of the Mosleyites and the teddy boys of Notting Hill Gate." When the mob was turned away from the board of education building by police with fire hoses, it roamed through the business district throwing bottles and stones at Negroes in buses and cars.

That night Mayor Morrison went on television to call for an end to the violence. He stressed the damage that could be done to the image of New Orleans as "a thriving center of commerce and industry" if the "ugly irresponsible incidents such as took place today" continued. But it may not be surprising to add that Morrison also told his audience that his administration was still offering passive resistance to the Supreme Court. "I should like to repeat," he said, "that the New Orleans police department has not and is not enforcing the federal court order relative to school integration" (Times-Picayune, 1960s). He and the police, he explained, were only trying to maintain law and order.

After Morrison's talk, Negro teenagers went out on the streets seeking revenge for the stoning of Negroes during the day. It was a wild night. One Negro boy was charged with attempted murder for shooting at two white men downtown, one white man was shot by a roving band of Negroes, and many whites were attacked by Negro gangs. In all, police made 250 arrests that night, mainly of Negroes. The next day Morrison called a closed-door meeting of leading citizens to discuss the crisis. The meeting was attended by 160 business and professional leaders, who issued a statement calling on citizens to do their part to preserve peace and order. The statement, signed by most of the very top economic elite, commended the mayor, the police, and the city council for preserving law and order, and made absolutely no mention of the school board. Many others (including Superintendent Redmond) praised the mayor and his police superintendent for their "coolness" and their ability to prevent the spreading of the riots, but one has only to look at the police activity in Atlanta and other cities to see how attributes other than coolness can be used to prevent violence from getting started in the first place. The white demonstrators and troublemakers in New Orleans were justified in believing they were acting with the tacit approval and support of the community, the police, and the mayor. Neither the mayor nor the elite, in their calls for peace, had ever suggested that desegregation was not an intolerable disaster. Morrison told reporters and others the segregationists had the right to demonstrate at the two schools so long as they did not disturb the peace, but when they did disturb the peace, the police told the demonstrators that if they stood on someone's lawn instead of the sidewalk, the police would be powerless to stop them. When the police stopped one mob a block away from the school board office, a woman grabbed Police Chief Giarrusso and pleaded with him to let the mob continue: "Chief, help us, not the United States government." Giarrusso replied: "We'll help you if you do it in an orderly manner. . . ." (Times-Picayune, 1960r).

The Paycheck Crisis

The state legislature and the governor apparently had learned that the school board had requested Wright to stop the legislative interference, for Risley Triche accused the board of complicity with the federal court and the NAACP, and on the first day of desegregation, the legislature addressed out of office the four "traitorous" members of the school board. The Louisiana Constitution permits the legislature to address out of office both elected and appointed officials "for any reasonable cause." The cause stated by the resolution was that the school board had created "a condition adverse to the best interests of the state of Louisiana and the parish of Orleans" (Pinney and Friedman, 1963, p. 14). By the time school opened the next day, however, Judge Wright had issued further orders putting the school board back in business.

The second special session of the legislature began on November 15, and the first act of this session was a concurrent resolution of both houses commending the parents who removed their children from the desegregated schools and pledging to them the support of the legislature in their "brave fight." The first meeting of this special session was held in strict secrecy. Senator Gravolet explained that this was necessary to prevent the federal court from serving the legislature with notices of an injunction. Rumors spread quickly of impeachment proceedings against Judge Wright and criminal action against the school board. Lloyd Rittiner said he expected to be arrested at any moment. What the legislature actually did was to declare all acts of the "now defunct New Orleans School Board" illegal and to warn all banks and businesses not to do business with, honor checks of, or make loans to the "old" school board. Further, they directed that the funds of the Orleans Parish school board be transferred to the legislature, and provided for a system of educational expense grants for children attending nonprofit, nonsectarian, nonpublic schools. It also fired Superintendent Redmond and Sam Rosenberg for not disclosing the names of the Negro girls and the white schools they would attend. The charges of "treason," applied to every legislator who dared even to question these bills, diminished the opposition to Davis' program. The tactics of Davis' floor leaders even forced Representative Landrieu to withdraw a modest resolution calling on state officials to use their influence to prevent violence and urging parents to express their indignation peacefully.

The attack on the school funds was by far the most menacing step the legislature had taken. In the previous school year (1959-60) the state had provided almost $16 million of the school board's $28.7 million--55.6 per cent of the total revenue.[7] Of the remainder, 42.5 per cent came from local property taxes levied by the school board. Though it would appear that the legislature could thus hold up only 55 per cent of the school board's revenues, it could in fact hold up more than that, for the school board does not have the power to collect the local property taxes it has levied. These taxes are collected once each spring by the city. Consequently the board is forced each year to borrow money from banks to pay the operating costs for the school year, and the board cannot enter into these loans without state approval.

The immediately pressing need was a loan of $2,100,000 to meet the November 23 payroll. Unsurprisingly, the State Bond and Tax Board refused to authorize the school board's request for this loan. One bank, the Whitney National, which continued to cash the school board's checks, was removed as fiscal agent for the state.

The schools were having other financial difficulties as well. In October, the board had had to reject a $10 million bond sale because the rates of the low bidder were the highest the board had ever received. A spokesman for the low bidder warned the board that the desegregation crisis might force them to pay even higher rates. The board rejected all bids and announced that its building program, already one year behind schedule, would be set back another year.

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[7] Figures from Department of Research, Census, and Planning (1960, p. 39).

The financial pinch was so bad and the first week of desegregation had been so hair-raising that on Friday, November 18, the school board went before Judge Wright and asked him to delay desegregation until the state and federal governments settled the issue of sovereignty. This was the school board's thirty-ninth appeal of federal court orders. Sam Rosenberg told the judges:

> From a practical point of view, the board is reaching a point that regardless of the orders of this court, we soon will be unable to operate. We are running out of money and the banks won't give us any. And rightfully so, probably--they don't know who's running the schools.
> [Southern School News, 1960.

The same day, the federal court heard two other requests, one by the plaintiffs in the Williams case for an injunction against further interference by the state, and another by U.S. Attorney Many for an injunction against state and local officials to prevent them from implementing the penalty provisions of the Interposition Act. The court took all three requests under advisement.

The state, sniping at the school board from all angles, got an injunction on November 14 from the state court in New Orleans restraining the school board, Redmond, and Rosenberg from interfering with the "legislature's" schools in Orleans Parish. But Sam Rosenberg was able to invoke a federal law to transfer this case to the federal court, where Judge Wright promptly nullified the state court decision. The state court refused to reactivate the case, and the Louisiana Supreme Court, on November 18, found the removal to the federal court improper but affirmed the lower state court's refusal to reactivate the case. This was the first setback for Davis in the state courts.

During the Thanksgiving vacation week, Leander Perez threw open the public schools of St. Bernard Parish to the pupils who wished to boycott the two desegregated schools in New Orleans. St. Bernard Parish was so close that six hundred students accepted the offer. The two desegregated schools had a total enrollment of 1,019 pupils, and in January Redmond attempted to find out where they were. He discovered that 601 were in schools in St. Bernard, 132 were in various other public and private schools, and apparently 286 children were receiving no education whatever. The legislature later reimbursed St. Bernard Parish for the expense involved in educating the 601 pupils.

On November 22, Redmond announced that the school system could not meet its teacher payroll since its application for a loan had been turned down by the state, but on the next day the legislature authorized the payment of all Orleans Parish school employees except the administrative staff and the teachers at the two desegregated schools. The teachers at Frantz and McDonogh 19 were not paid until after Christmas.

On November 30, the three-judge federal court in New Orleans announced its decision on all the matters that had come before it during the month. The state attorney general rested his sole defense on the Interposition Act; the court ruled it and the rest of the legislature's package unconstitutional. Once again, the court enjoined over seven hundred state and city officials from interfering with desegregation. The district court turned down the request of the school board to have desegregation delayed. On December 12, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the district court's decision (Bush v. Orleans Parish School Board; Williams v. Davis; United States v. Louisiana, 1960b). The decision of November 30, though by no means the last decision in the case, was the climax to the legal battle. With the collapse of interposition, the rest of the segregation package had nothing to stand on.

On December 21, the three-judge federal court invalidated the principal acts of the second special session--the resolution which warned banks not to do business with the "defunct" Orleans Parish school board and that which transferred school board funds to the legislature, and Act 2, which provided for the creation of a new New Orleans school board. Additionally the court ordered four large New Orleans banks to cash checks drawn by the school board on the money the board had on deposit with these banks. Again the court had to enjoin state officials from interfering with the desegregation of the New Orleans schools.

The battle between the federal courts and the state of Louisiana was now utterly predictable, and many were wondering when Davis and his floor leaders would cease beating the dead horse. In all, Governor Davis called five special sessions, extending all the way to February 26, 1961, but at each succeeding session fewer and fewer significant acts were introduced. The oratory in these sessions grew more heated, and the denunciations of Judge Wright, the Supreme Court, the federal government, the school board, and all the other enemies of diehard segregation and white supremacy grew more vehement, but after November 30, 1960, it was assumed that any act the legislature passed to interfere with the school desegregation would be struck down by the federal courts. In all the federal court decisions in the eight-year history of the case, there was never so much as a single dissenting opinion. Eventually, even the legislature revolted against Davis when he proposed on December 17 a one-cent sales tax increase to finance the start of a grant-in-aid private school program.[8]

The Battle against the Boycott

Perhaps _because_ legislative interposition had failed, the street disturbances in New Orleans grew more intense after November 30. The real battle was now being fought in the streets of New Orleans.

At McDonogh 19 and especially at Frantz a crowd of housewives gathered daily. One indication of the Ninth Ward syndrome was the sign carried by one demonstrator: "If you are poor, mix; if you are rich, forget about it; some law!" The main purpose of the mob was to harass the whites who were breaking the boycott. Two paragraphs from the Louisiana Advisory Committee's (1961, p. 16) report to the United States Commission on Civil Rights effectively describe the street disturbances.

> During the last days of November, Reverend Lloyd Foreman and Mrs. James Gabrielle, who had continued to take their children to the Frantz school, were subjected to abuse and physical violence by the mob in front of the school. This, coupled with the fact that several parents in the Frantz school area had appealed to S.O.S. for help in returning their children to school, led to the organization of a volunteer "carlift," run by parents from the uptown section of New Orleans, which transported the children to school in relative safety. The "carlift"

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[8] This part of the story, centering on fiscal policy in Louisiana, is not fully germane to this study. For the interested reader, the story is documented by Pinney and Friedman (1963) and in the _Southern School_ News (1961_a_, _b_).

> began on December 1. The car carrying Yolanda Gabrielle was stoned and manhandled by the mob. Later in the week, it was pursued for two miles by a truck which had tried to ram it. Until Wednesday, December 7, the drivers and the women who escorted the children into the school were subjected to the vilest sort of shouted abuse from the daily-assembled crowds. On December 7, the police guarding the school pushed the crowd behind barricades a full block away from the school.
>
> The crowd then dispersed to roam the streets of the Florida Housing Project, where many of the children live. Their parents were subjected to an organized telephone campaign of threats and abuse. Their houses and other properties were stoned, as was one of the mothers of a child at Frantz. The jobs of the fathers were threatened; four of them lost their jobs. . . . The volunteer drivers were threatened with death, arson, disfigurement . . . in a concerted telephone campaign. . . . With the exception of a couple of juveniles alleged to have stoned Mrs. Marion McKinley [mother of white children at Frantz], no one connected with the demonstrations was arrested, nor was the mob in front of the school dispersed or told to move on.

On November 29, press reports indicated that the police permitted a mob of four hundred to follow Mrs. Gabrielle and her daughter home from school. At home, their windows were smashed, but, according to the account of an SOS member (Wisdom, 1961), the family was unable to get police protection until "a wire service man called headquarters and promised to print a story on police indifference." Mr. Gabrielle, who worked for the city, was harassed by frequent reports given to him by his supervisor that his wife had been shot. Each time, as he want home to find her safe and then come back to work, he was told he couldn't keep his job if he was continually running home. Gabrielle finally resigned, and when he was unable to get another job, the Gabrielles left New Orleans in mid-December.

The high point of the back-to-school movement was December 6, when a total of twenty-three white children attended Frantz. The number was never again to climb that high, for at this point the Citizens Council renewed its efforts to enforce the boycott. A new wave of threats, stonings, and other harassments began and immediately pushed the number back to eight. Two parents, Marion McKinley and Marvin Chandler, withdrew their children after being threatened--they reported that their windows were broken nine separate times. Another parent, Everett Poling, removed his child after threats on his family and the slashing of his tires. On December 8, the Citizens Council distributed a list of all the volunteer drivers, describing their cars and showing their telephone numbers. This stopped the carlift. Starting with December 9, the federal marshals began transporting the white children who wanted to attend Frantz. But the pressure generated by the threatening telephone calls was too effective; the number of whites attending Frantz was kept at ten or fewer for the remainder of the school year.

As part of the campaign to perfect the boycott, Emile Wagner sued Redmond to obtain the names of all the pupils enrolled at Frantz. The state court ordered Redmond to give the names to Wagner (Wagner v. Redmond, 1960). But he did not get the names until February of 1961, when the Louisiana Court of Appeals affirmed the decision (Wagner v. Redmond, 1961).

The sidewalk in front of Frantz school had become an international spectacle with a huge press and television corps. Many national papers carried a running box score on the number of whites attending Frantz. The main attraction was a group of women whom the reporters called "the cheerleaders," who showed up each day to pass their latest press clippings around and lead the assault. John Steinbeck, who made a point of going through New Orleans in his "search for America," described the scene this way (Steinbeck, 1963, pp. 255-56):

> The crowd was waiting for the white man who dared to bring his white child to school [Rev. Lloyd Foreman]. And here he came along the guarded walk, . . . leading his frightened child by the hand. . . . The muscles of his cheeks stood out from clenched jaws, a man afraid who by his will held his fears in check, . . .
>
> A shrill, grating voice rang out. The yelling was not in chorus. . . . The crowd broke into howls and roars and whistles of applause. This is what they had come to see and hear.
>
> No newspaper had printed the words these women shouted. It was indicated that they were indelicate, some even said obscene. On television the sound track was made to blur or had crowd noises cut in to cover. But now I heard the words, bestial and filthy and degenerate.
>
> The words written down are dirty, carefully and selectedly filthy. But there was something far worse here than dirt, a kind of frightening witches' Sabbath. Here was no spontaneous cry of anger, of insane rage. . . . no principle good or bad . . . The crowd behind the barrier roared and cheered and pounded one another with joy. . . .

What does Steinbeck mean by saying that "there is something far worse here than dirt"? Partly he is reminding us that what is wrong is that this is civilized New Orleans--after watching this, he adds, "I could no more have gone to Galatoire's for an omelet and champagne than I could have danced on a grave." But the other reason why this scene is incongruous (like a picture that was "distorted and out of drawing") is that the mob was not acting out of rage, it was merely a collection of housewives entertaining themselves. And why shouldn't they? They were not doing anything illegal, as far as the police were concerned.

In November, Morrison blamed the street disturbances on "outside agitators" such as Rainach and Perez. In December, he found a new scapegoat--the press. The screamers were obviously enjoying their press clippings and their performances on television, and Morrison claimed that the performance of the crowd was purely for the benefit of reporters and television cameramen. On December 4 he asked for a three-day moratorium on press coverage of the school protests. This request, he said, "comes from the heart of a public official who has spent most of his life trying to build the economy and the good name of New Orleans." He went on to explain that the "impression" of turmoil created by the press coverage is bad for New Orleans business, "and it is a damage that we are suffering completely without fault on our part" (New York Times, 1960f [italics added]. When the reporters refused to stay away, he asked them to form a small pool to cover the story. The reporters said they would form a pool if he would reduce the number of demonstrators proportionately, but Morrison refused.

Whether the reporters were the cause or the effect of the trouble stirred our New Orleans respondents as did few other questions. The members of the economic elite whom we interviewed were vehement in their denunciations of Time, the New York Times, Huntley and Brinkly, and the press in general. If that rabble had kept out of our good city, they seemed to say, we could have handled our problems with a minimum of difficulty. The economic elite and other "moderates" told the interviewer they saw Time's newsmen and the television cameramen rehearsing the crowd on how and when to yell. An article in The Nation the following year by a reporter who had been there (Opotowsky, 1961) agreed with Morrison; he cited the New Orleans coverage as one of many examples of newsmen, by their very presence, making the news. He believed that, had it not been for the reporters, the mob might have dispersed after its first outburst.

To the people who had to endure the hatred, the jeers, the stoning, and the loss of jobs, there was more than an "impression" of turmoil in

New Orleans. The broken windows in the houses of the people who dared send their children to school attest to something much more real than Morrison and the economic elite were willing to admit existed. The windows were not broken in front of reporters, the men were not fired from their jobs in front of the television cameras; the threatening phone calls were not made to newspaper men. It seems very likely that the intense feeling of our respondents toward the reporters is simply a reaction to guilt. These men did not make any effort to stop the street scenes--now they would like to believe that they should not be blamed for doing nothing, that either the press exaggerated the story or else really caused the whole trouble.

This is a critical point in the New Orleans story. Morrison's attempt first to blame Rainach and Perez and then the press is part of his refusal to accept any responsibility for the school problem. ("We are suffering completely without fault on our part [New York Times, 1960e]." "My job is to maintain law and order . . . not to run the schools [Pinney and Friedman, 1963, p. 17].") Incredibly, he made these statements while street disturbances were keeping children from attending public schools in his city. His efforts were directed, not at stopping the trouble, but at keeping the press from reporting it.

In mid-December, with tourist trade off because of the bad publicity, rumors spread that the city's famed Mardi Gras would not be held. Morrison's action on this issue provides an interesting contrast to his noninvolvement in the schools. First, he announced that that year's Mardi Gras (to be held in February) was definitely on, and, indeed, would be the biggest ever. To counteract the effect the unfavorable publicity might have on the Mardi Gras, Morrison wrote to all major cities saying there is no friction in New Orleans and urging people to come to New Orleans.

Every year the first important Mardi Gras event is the "landing" and parade of the Zulus, a group of Negroes who wear blackface, hand out coconuts, wear grass skirts, and, in general, dress and act like the savage buffoons the prejudiced white person thinks they are.[9] With the Mardi Gras coming in the midst of white segregationist threats to the school system, many leading Negroes felt Negro participation in the Mardi Gras, and especially the Zulu parade, would be demeaning. Calvin Trillin, in an article in the New Yorker, describes the Negro efforts to boycott the Mardi Gras in general and to stop the Zulu parade. He reports (Trillin, 1964, p. 42) that an advertisement in a Negro weekly in Louisiana presented in petition signed by 27,000 which read:

> We, the Negroes of New Orleans, are in the midst of a fight for our rights and for a recognition of our human dignity . . . Therefore, we resent and repudiate the Zulu parade. . . .

Under pressure from leading Negroes, the Zulus reluctantly voted to cancel the parade. Morrison was fearful that word of the Zulu cancellation would add fuel to the rumors that the Mardi Gras would not be held or give tourists the impression there was a possibility of racial strife in the city. When

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[9] If the reader is bothered by this interpretation of the Zulus, he should recall that only seventy years ago the "Coon shows" playing in New York City included titles like Dat Watermillyon, and The Gentlemen's Coon Parade: "you'll find no common second-class nigs / in the Gentlemen's Coon parade" (Osofsky, 1963, p.38).

Morrison talked to the Zulus, they explained their own eagerness to have the parade but told him they feared hostile acts by both resentful Negroes and segregationist whites. Morrison and the police chief guaranteed the Zulus that they would be fully protected, and they were. A huge contingent of zigzagging motorcycle cops kept the Zulus completely isolated from the audience that lined the route. A friend of Morrison's told the interviewer that Morrison thought it was a great joke on the Negroes and others who had criticized his failure to protect the white children who wished to attend Frantz school.

The Elite Acts

In December, a page-one story in the New York Times under the byline of Claude Sitton was headlined "New Orleans Rift Takes Trade Toll." This fact, Sitton reported, was apparent in Morrison's public utterances and in the private remarks of business and civic leaders. Business leaders declined to speak for the record but privately estimated hotel and restaurant trade to be about 20 per cent off the customary rate. Hotel cancellations nationally were averaging 10 to 12 per cent, but in New Orleans for the previous twenty-day period the figure was higher than 25 per cent. One New Orleans executive said: "Canal Street merchants told me that their business for November--as of [November 25]--was the worst in memory, even including the depression" (New York Times, 1960e). The same executive told Sitton that one major department store's sales had dropped 35 per cent and the sales of another had dropped more than 40 per cent. Sitton learned that business leaders were greatly disturbed, but most "reluctant to make any public attempt to resolve the problem apparently out of fear that this might bring economic sanctions from the Citizens Councils. . . ." The Times-Picayune did not carry this part of the story, and a New Orleans reporter told us that New Orleans newspapermen read out-of-town papers in order to keep up with economic developments.

Like Morrison, the Times-Picayune could be strongly provoked by any threats to the Mardi Gras. When the American Veterans Committee in New York suggested that tourists avoid the Mardi Gras while the turmoil in New Orleans streets continued, the Times-Picayune (1960t) in an editorial on December 14, called the A.V.C. a socialistic, bigoted organization. It continued thus:

> Admittedly, New Orleans is caught in racial tensions. That, however, is a situation not of our own making. It was thrust upon us illegally and incited callously by extraneous forces that care not a whit what harm is done the city. . . .
>
> The city has conducted itself commendably during these trying times and has preserved its dignity . . . .

The wording is very similar to Morrison's disavowal of any responsibility for the events of the past year.

But the economic pressures finally stirred the business leaders. On December 14, the same day the above editorial appeared, 105 business and professional men of New Orleans signed a three-quarter page advertisement in the Times-Picayune appealing for an end to threats and street demonstrations and for support of the school board. The ad said all the things that had been unsaid for four long weeks. Indeed, the ad said things that needed to be said before desegregation began. In other cities, such statements were made to prevent a crisis. Where the appeals of citizens had failed to stir the elite, an economic slump finally moved them into action. It seems incredible that they did not foresee the economic consequences of the strife and lawlessness in their city. An article by Dykeman and Stokely (1960) quotes an unnamed southerner as saying:

> Several months ago a business leader from Little Rock came to New Orleans to talk with some of the merchants and industrialists about the potential for damage to business that lay in this school situation. Many of the businessmen wouldn't even discuss the subject with him and the rest were very cool to the case he was trying to make for preparation to avert crisis.

At any rate, by December 14, they had learned for themselves, and the ad signaled the end of the economic elite's passivity.

The day after the statement by the businessmen, the Citizens Council held another mass rally in the municipal auditorium, but this one was poorly attended, attracting only one-fourth of the crowd which attended the November 15 meeting. The statement of the businessmen was roundly denounced, and following the rally the businessmen began to receive threatening phone calls. At the rally, Dr. Emmett L. Irwin, chairman of the Council, brought to the stage seven little white children, four of them dressed in blackface. On signal, the children began kissing, and Irwin told the audience, "That's just a little demonstration of what integration means. Is that what you want?"

Many other problems remained unsolved. On December 22, the legislature adjourned without releasing funds for the salaries of four thousand teachers and other employees of the Orleans school system. December 23 was supposed to be payday. When the legislature adjourned, legislative leaders said that the various federal court orders had tied the hands of the legislature and made it impossible to release the funds. Some of these funds were released in January, but again not for Redmond, Rosenberg, or the teachers at Frantz and McDonogh 19. Federal court orders directed at various banks released some money. (Despite the earlier court orders directing the banks to release funds held on deposit, the banks had refused to honor paychecks written on these deposits.) A wealthy woman in St. Louis sent a considerable sum to pay the teachers at Frantz and McDonogh 19, and a wealthy woman in New Orleans contributed another sum to help with the salaries. In January, the new involvement of the businessmen provided another financial boost. With the State Loan Board still refusing to sanction loans in anticipation of local taxes, Mayor Morrison appealed to property owners to pay their taxes in advance (they were not due until June). Leading businesses, including the city's public utility and the newspapers, responded and paid in advance--one more sign that the business leaders were no longer content to sit and watch the school system get shot down. Nevertheless, the financial condition of the school system was still weak when the 1961-62 school year began.

As we noted, throughout January and February, the legislature continued to create new school boards for Orleans Parish, and Attorney General Gremillion continued to fire Sam Rosenberg. In January, the school board got a kick in the pants from yet another source. The Louisiana School Boards Association, of which Matthew Sutherland was the president, had voted in December to support the governor and the legislature in the school crisis. In January, two days before Sutherland's term as president of the Association was to expire, he and the three other moderates on the Orleans school board were ousted from the Association by a vote of 210 to 9. The legislature promptly passed a resolution thanking the Association.

All along, however, the board members and the superintendent believed that all their difficulties, bad as they were, could be handled if the mayor and the leading businessmen would only support the board's efforts. Throughout the troubled months, the women in CPE, IWO, and the League of Women Voters had worked unceasingly to involve the economic elite. It was the women who had obtained the signatures for the ad endorsing Sutherland and for the December 14th ad. On January 30, the efforts of the women, plus the financial difficulties of the downtown businesses, culminated in a huge testimonial dinner at the Roosevelt Hotel for the four board members and the superintendent. A total of 1,650 citizens came to the dinner to pay tribute to the sacrifices the school board had made to preserve public education in New Orleans.

One of the organizers of the meeting made a short address in which he said a recent New York Times editorial had asked, "Where are the southern moderates?" This gathering, said the speaker, is our answer; we are here at the Roosevelt Hotel. Introducing the main speaker, Harry Kelleher, a prominent attorney who is one of the top members of the economic elite, the master of ceremonies said: "If the face of the mob on Carondelet Street is our worst face, our speaker tonight represents our best face--the aspect with which we would like to face the nation and world at this time" (Times-Picayune, 1961). The things Kelleher said were incontestable. They should have been said in public long before then. But to hear a member of the elite say these things in public was like the end of a nightmare: "We are confronted now with the question of whether we believe our public school system is worth preserving. . . . We must consider whether we believe in due process of law . . . , and second, whether we believe in public education. This country and the South cannot afford to go backward." Citing the gallant fight (thirty-seven appeals to the courts) the board put up to resist desegregation, Kelleher said the four men "have stood steadfast and discharged their full duty to us and to the children of this community. It behooves all of us to support these four honorable men. . . . We owe them our everlasting gratitude" (Times-Picayune, 1961). The relief and the exhilaration felt by the board members can be seen in the brief speech of thanks delivered by board member Riecke (Times-Picayune, 1961):

> We believe . . . very strongly that the people of New Orleans elected us to the school board not only to administer business affairs of the school system but to improve and perpetuate public education in the city of New Orleans. . . .
>
> We are going to do exactly that, come hell or high water. . . .
>
> With the help of the taxpayer, and with the help of good citizens like you who are supporting us, we cannot fail.

One must recall, to get the significance of this public dinner, the atmosphere during the height of the crisis. One board member told us that old friends would pass him in church and furtively whisper to him, with their eyes averted, that he was doing a good job. He told these friends the best thing they could do for him would be to speak to him openly on the street, but this they refused to do, even though they thought he was doing the right thing. Another school board member told the interviewer two businessmen had phoned him during the height of the crisis and said they would like to meet him at a restaurant in the French Quarter and discuss ways of helping the board. He was overjoyed and replied that if he could just be seen having lunch with them that would be the biggest help they could give. But they were having none of that. They would have lunch with him in private; they would arrive at a different time and meet him in a private room. At lunch, they offered to try to get the banks and the legislature to release the money needed for teachers' salaries, and they made a genuine effort to do so even though they failed. But the school board member was correct: what he needed most from them was a public affirmation of support. Only with that could the board begin to solve its problems. The behind-the-scenes talks were to no avail; the problems could not be solved until the governor, the legislature, and the mayor and people of New Orleans knew that the power structure of the city was standing firmly and openly behind the school board.

The January testimonial finally provided the needed public display of confidence and support. From that point on, though the boycott was still effective, though the school system's finances took another year to straighten out, the school board and the superintendent knew their problems, serious as they were, were manageable. The worst of the crisis was over.

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CHAPTER III

WHY NEW ORLEANS?

Why did violence occur in New Orleans and not in other cities? There are several different kinds of explanations which could be made. First, there is the "national climate" theory--that southern school integration took many communities to the brink of violence, and that, as school integration moved into the Deep South, some school system would go over the edge--if it had not been New Orleans, it would have been somewhere else. The three major crises--Little Rock, New Orleans, and Birmingham, were neatly spaced at three-year intervals. Does this suggest that 1960 was a year for trouble, and that New Orleans happened to be unlucky?

We do not believe this to be a useful explanation. First, the early incidents of violence--Sturgis, Clinton, Mansfield, and Little Rock--each occurred because of a new and unexpected factor, each demonstrated some new principle, and each set an example for other cities. From Clinton, police learned the danger of the traveling provocateur. From Mansfield, we learned that the state could intercede to prevent integration, and from Little Rock, we learned what lay down that road. From Virginia, we learned that southerners would not tolerate disbanding the public education system, and that private schools simply would not work. But there was nothing new about New Orleans. No rational person could look at New Orleans and believe that school integration could be avoided by the same old mob and picket phenomena which had been used in Little Rock. Furthermore, people in New Orleans and

Atlanta knew the price that Little Rock had paid in its unsuccessful attempt to find some way around the Brown decision. Nor can we accept the idea that New Orleans had to be violent just because it was the first city to desegregate in the Deep South. New Orleans, at least, had a history of desegregated colleges to get it used to the idea. In any case, even if 1960 was a time to expect trouble, this hypothesis does not explain why New Orleans did so little to prepare for it, while Atlanta, which did not desegregate until 1961, was already taking steps to ease the process.

A second possible explanation for New Orleans is that the segregationist activity centered around mass demonstrations of great magnitude which were beyond control from the start. This also seems implausible. If it were the case, then there are certainly many southern cities where segregationist opposition would be even greater, and the large rural areas of the South should have been consumed in a bonfire of segregationist activity.

A third possible explanation is a purely political one--that the political leadership at the state and federal level was responsible. At the state level, this at first seems quite plausible. We have seen that the state legislature passed a long list of rather ingenious bills. But it must be remembered that nearly all this legislation was voided by Judge Wright before it could have any lasting impact. The state was unable to compel the closing of the schools, to enforce the boycott, or to provide funds to support private schools for the boycotters (although they did reimburse Leander Perez' parish later). In Virginia, on the other hand, the state was allowed to close the schools, and it seems fairly clear that regardless of which city in Virginia desegregated first, its schools would be closed.

In Louisiana the state was limited to little more than a harassing rear-guard action. We do not believe that this in itself would have been sufficient to create and maintain a year-long boycott. In addition, we should recall that the relationship between New Orleans and the state was a two-way interaction. Even when it became fairly obvious that the state legislature was trying to disrupt the New Orleans schools without any hope of actually preventing desegregation, the New Orleans delegation, Mayor Morrison, and other local political leaders made only a token fight. Georgia could have harassed the Atlanta schools in the same way (and Atlanta represents a smaller portion of the Georgia population than New Orleans does in Louisiana). Again, why New Orleans and not Atlanta?

Peltason, Muse, and others have noted that at various times the federal government was slow to take action to prevent school desegregation crises. We might apply this consideration in explaining the crises in other cities, but it is more difficult to apply it to New Orleans. The United States Justice Department could have entered the New Orleans case much earlier--it was no secret that President Eisenhower held back Attorney General Rogers, who was eager to enter the case, until after the Presidential election, so that the crisis was fully developed before the Justice Department finally did step in. But on the other hand, Judge Skelly Wright acted with astonishing speed in invalidating various efforts of the state to interfere. And federal marshals escorted the Negro girls to school every day and, beginning with the ninth of December, escorted the white pupils as well. The federal government did as much or more in New Orleans as it did anywhere else. Furthermore, the federal police role is by definition reactive--it could only appear after a crisis had begun.

Fourth, we can advance the hypothesis that the New Orleans crisis resulted from a chance accumulation of various factors and that there is no general explanation. This is the sort of explanation which reads: if New Orleans had not had Leander Perez next door, and if Morrison had not wanted to run for governor, and if the school computer had not picked out schools in Ward Nine for desegregation, and if Archbishop Rummel had not broken his hip, and so forth. While this explanation makes some sense--there is a good deal of chance in any action--it does not strike us as a particularly good explanation. First of all, the list of accidents is not so very long. Second, Catholic schools do not always desegregate before the public schools do, so that cannot be the major factor; and we can find similar qualifications for the other if's. Summing all the "accidents" does not give us the impression that 1960 was an unlucky year for New Orleans. And some of these "accidents" cannot be treated as mere chance occurrences. For example, several of our informants claimed that they had opposed the use of the computer to choose white slum schools and had been overridden in the decision-making process.

One way to demonstrate that there was more than chance involved in 1960 is to contrast the behavior of the actors in 1960 with that in 1961, when the second year of desegregation began. In 1961 the school board again employed the computer. This time, when the computer again produced the names of slum schools for desegregation, the program was changed until the school board could get some schools that it wanted--in this case, schools in the silk-stocking area where support for desegregation was greatest. In addition, in 1961 the police were under orders to disperse crowds, rather than merely "prevent violence." Finally, the civic and economic elite in the city purchased an advertisement, calling for peaceful desegregation, before school opened. If we contrast this ad with the three statements made in 1960, we see that the civic elite was out in full force in 1961 for the first time. In the course of our interviewing, we asked twenty-two respondents to designate those persons "most influential" in local decisions. This yielded a very distinct list of leaders: fourteen men received two or more mentions in this listing, and the three top leaders were mentioned twenty, eleven, and seven times, respectively.

Table III.1 reveals that the leaders signed the ad supporting Sutherland and the ad supporting peaceful desegregation in 1961, but they did not sign the ad calling for support of the school board in 1960. The contrast between 1960 and 1961 is clear. The 1960 ad supporting the school board did not come until December, when the boycott was two months old and business was hard hit, yet the ad still lacked the signatures of most of the top leaders.

The changed approach of the school board, the police, the mayor, and the civic elite in 1961 seemed to pay off. The newly desegregated schools had only minor difficulties, and the Frantz enrollment soared to 100 (out of a capacity of 575). The total boycott at McDonogh 19 was finally broken but remained successful nonetheless. Five Negroes and fifteen whites enrolled there. In January, 1962, McDonogh 19 was converted to an all-Negro school, but a legal hassle blocked the change, so it remained a desegregated school with twenty pupils. The continuing boycotts at Frantz and McDonogh 19 are really not surprising; these children had been in other schools with little or no tuition, and for many of them there was no real advantage to transferring back.

TABLE III.1

NUMBER OF SIGNATORIES AND NUMBER OF LEADERS SIGNING FOUR STATEMENTS

Date	Subject	Number of Signatories	Number of Leaders (Out of Possible 10)[a]	Comment
Nov. 7, 1960	Support for Sutherland's reelection[b]	98	6	Made no mention of desegregation or of school board
Nov. 17, 1960	Deploring violence[c]	160	7	Praised mayor for preserving law and order, but made no mention of school board
Dec. 14, 1960	Deploring violence and calling for support of school board[d]	105	1	Boycott now two months old; Mardi Gras threatened
Aug. 31, 1961	Call for peaceful desegregation in compliance with orders of federal courts	315	9	Before school opened

[a] Of the fourteen who were mentioned twice, four are not included here. One was Leander Perez, one was the mayor (and mayors do not sign such petitions), one was the position of president of the Chamber of Commerce, and the fourth was a known liberal who was supporting the drive to get the signatures.

[b] The November 7, 1960, ad for Sutherland was markedly brief, giving no hint either of the crisis in the city or of the stand taken by Sutherland. It said: "We believe that we and our children will all have a better future if Matt Sutherland is reelected to the School Board."

[c] The November 17, 1960, statement praising the mayor for preserving law and order was issued at the request of the mayor and came the morning after riots and violence had erupted on the streets.

[d] The December 14, 1960, ad was the first call for the support of the school board by an elite body. The one top leader on the ad was the single most influential member of the elite.

We think the events of 1961 indicate that the situation in 1960 was controllable and that something more than mere accident, or a coincidence of several accidents, caused the difficulty.

What hypotheses do seem to be reasonable explanations, then? First, we must consider that some of the difficulty arose because of the behavior of the school board. They maintained a head-in-the-sand attitude for over four years, when they could have been letting the public know that desegregation was coming. It was not until the beginning of July, 1960, that the board members decided to work to keep the schools open. Yet even during the school board election, as late as the first week of November, board members were pledging their full cooperation to Governor Davis if he could keep the schools open and segregated. Though the board held little hope for Davis' efforts (Sutherland cautioned the voters on the necessity of facing the issues "as they are, not as we would have them to be") the board members nevertheless could not bring themselves to say flatly that desegregation was unavoidable. And on November 18, after the first week of desegregation, the school board once again asked the federal courts to delay desegregation. Although it is impossible to demonstrate, we think that had the school board acted earlier, the rest of the community would have had more time to make adjustments and begin to build a save-the-schools movement.

Second, the school board could have avoided the fiasco caused by their choice of schools to integrate. It is important to realize that, even if we dismiss as mere Monday-morning quarterbacking the claims made by various respondents that they had expressed their opposition to the computerized selection, the fact remains that the school board had ample reason to know that they had more favorable alternatives. They had been invited to send Negro students to two silk-stocking schools, and they had rejected the invitation. They knew that their main support groups, SOS and CPE, had been unable to organize in the ninth ward. The school board members told us that they had refused to intervene in the selection of schools and had ordered the use of the computer because they did not want to have a part in deciding who would have to suffer integration. In other words, this was part of the syndrome: first refusing to believe that integration was coming, then refusing to draw a plan so that Skelley Wright played school administrator in addition to his other roles in this crisis, and finally refusing to have anything to do with selecting the schools.

But the board did look for ways to build public support. First, the parents were polled to see whether they preferred "a small amount of integration" to closing the schools. The reader might object that the school board should have been telling the voters that schools would be open rather than asking their opinion, but we interpret the referendum as a shrewd maneuver to build support. On its face, it looks as if the "loaded" questions would have gotten a favorable response. Why did they not? The best explanation we can produce is that the questionnaire was administered too early.

The postcard questionnaires were sent out April 22, 1960. At that time, the school board, the mayor, the economic elite, and the newspapers still had their heads in the sand, and most citizens of New Orleans probably thought of desegregation as a phenomenon of the remote future. There was simply no public discussion of the issue.[1] It was not until May 16,

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[1] Breed's (1965) measurement of space devoted to the issue in the Times-Picayune supports the word of our respondents on this point. In

1960, when Judge Wright issued his decision setting the date for September, that the city became aware of the immediacy of the issue. Six months later, after prolonged public discussion of the issue, Sutherland ran on a save-the-schools platform and won reelection. Of course he was an incumbent and had a well-organized campaign; even so, it seems hard to believe that an electorate deeply committed to closing the schools would have supported him. This leads us back to our initial point: the school board should have taken a public position earlier. Even if the initial reaction to their position had been hostile, an early stand would have generated earlier the kind of public discussion which eventually led to Sutherland's victory in November. Had the postcard poll been conducted after some public discussion instead of before it, Rittiner's faith in the attachment of New Orleans parents to the public schools might have been borne out.

Of course the school board received very little help from the other actors in the community. Morrison did nothing; the economic elite did nothing; even the "Girls" were slow to organize. The save-the-schools campaign reached its peak with the testimonial dinner, when the boycott was two months old. The school board had made private overtures to all these people without success. This bring us to our principal hypothesis--that the New Orleans crisis arose from a general failure of community leadership, resulting in a breakdown of social control over the masses. The school board, the mayor, and the civic elite all shied away from taking action. In fact, the New Orleans civic elite has always been reluctant to become involved in local

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February of 1960 there was no space whatsoever devoted to the subject; in the first half of May there were only sixty column inches. But in the fifteen days following Wright's order, there were 320 column inches, and the number increased thereafter. In Atlanta, by contrast, the story was front-page news in 1958.

politics, and this withdrawal has tended to produce the kind of mayor, and the kind of school board which New Orleans had in 1960.

The civic elite's withdrawal from the school desegregation controversy is important primarily because these men have power and at the same time are much more insulated from public opinion than are the elected officials. Their power take several forms: they have the money with which to influence political campaigns and to influence public opinion, they have personal influence over many leaders in the community, and they hold the positions of highest prestige, especially in a southern city. Other people have power, but most of them are also vulnerable--ministers can be fired, politicians defeated, and anyone who is an employee can lose his job.

If the civic elite had decided early enough to support peaceful desegregation, they could have taken several steps. The Times-Picayune could have supported peaceful desegregation and the save-the-schools movement. An advertising campaign could have been conducted (Dallas businessmen, for example, bought space on streetcars). They could have persuaded ministers to make public appeals for peace. Our respondents who were close to Morrison reported that he would definitely have taken a strong public position if he had had support from the top leaders. The businessmen could have made it clear to Morrison that they did not want--indeed, would not tolerate--street disturbances that would damage business in the city. In turn, Morrison could have had the police disperse the demonstrators and arrest those who resisted. (In Atlanta, police permitted no crowd to gather in front of the desegregated schools. The few who refused to move on were arrested and given jail sentences. That ended the loitering.) The top businessmen could have offered jobs and job security to those white parents who wanted to send their children to school. Many would-be demonstrators would have been deterred had they seen their employers listed as leaders in the save-the-schools movement. The businessmen could have advised the school board on the importance of choosing schools which would welcome token desegregation. Above all, the economic elite could have let the board know that they would support them if the school board would begin the public discourse by taking an early stand. The economic elite, most of them supporters of Governor Davis, could have put some public pressure on Davis to stop interfering in the New Orleans school situation. Again, these are all obvious steps which in other cities have ordinarily led to a chain reaction and a strong community consensus in favor of peaceful desegregation.

Most of our respondents in New Orleans believed these actions should have been taken; they were not sure why they were not. Those respondents who were members of the economic elite told us that either (1) none of these actions needed to be taken because there was no crisis, or (2) they knew these steps should have been taken, but their businesses were too vulnerable for them to engage publicly in controversial issues.

Why did the New Orleans elite fail to act? The first and most obvious hypothesis is that there is a power vacuum--that leadership is diffuse, fractionated, and invisible and therefore difficult to coordinate. This does not seem to be the case, however. We asked twenty-two respondents (including school board members, other actors in the desegregation crisis, and those they named as community influentials) to name the city's influential men. We found a surprising amount of agreement. One man was named by twenty of the twenty-two respondents, and six of these respondents immediately named him as the single most influential person. Only two others were named as the single most influential, and these two were given this rank only once each. Another man was named eleven times, two were named seven times, and one was named six times.

In addition, there is a strong grapevine connecting the top elites to one another. They check with one another on the telephone, meet at their clubs, and even write to one another on civic issues. From the interview data available to us, we believe that a full-scale study would indicate that New Orleans has a power structure similar to that described by Hunter (1953) as existing in Atlanta. To some extent our sample is biased since it includes many respondents who were involved in school desegregation. But we do not think that the list of influentials consists of an elite specializing in race relations. The leaders identified by this listing include those responsible for the present efforts to attract industry to Louisiana. Most important, as we have already stressed, these men were not involved in the school desegregation struggle.

Although we did not systematically attempt to study other issues, we collected enough incidental information to indicate that the men listed as influential did have influence. We know, for example, that there was less difficulty after these men gave their support at the testimonial dinner and that in 1961, when they took a public stand early in the campaign, the desegregation went smoothly.

We find a similar pattern in two other racial issues. In 1963, Negroes were threatening to hold public demonstrations because they were not allowed to sit on the benches in the public park. The mayor (Schiro) refused to meet with the Negroes--he had a meeting to attend, he said. But the man who was at the top of our list of influential citizens called the mayor out of the meeting and ordered him to meet with the Negroes. The mayor did. But in 1962, 1963, and 1964, Negro leaders made extensive efforts to get the mayor to appoint a public biracial committee to handle racial problems. Many moderates (including some of the elite) backed this proposal. The mayor let it be known that he would favor such a committee if he could get the backing and participation of the city's top influentials. But because two of the top men on our list opposed the formation of such a committee, no such committee was formed. (Meanwhile, the governor of Louisiana, elected originally as a segregationist, saw fit to form a state biracial committee; so now New Orleans is lagging behind the state of Louisiana in at least this one principal aspect of racial relations.)

Thus, not only do the men on our list have the reputation of being influential, but when they wanted the mayor to do something, he did it. When they oppose something the rest of the community wanted and the mayor was willing to go along with, it did not get done. When these men would not endorse peaceful desegregation, the city did not have it. And when these men backed peaceful desegregation, the city had peaceful desegregation. So apparently there is a power structure. The question is, what does the power structure want?

First, there is a general withdrawal of the elite from politics. This may seem strange, since Morrison was elected on the basis of a reform vote and was generally seen as a reform mayor interested in economic development. And Morrison certainly had the support of the economic elite. But in contrast to other southern cities, the economic leaders did not play a prominent role in his election. He was not a candidate chosen by the elite, nor was he a member of their group. If the economic leaders had wished to recruit a candidate to run against Mayor Maestri in 1946, it is unlikely that they would have chosen Morrison. He was only thirty-four, had a playboy reputation, and had never had to meet a payroll. He was from the right section of town (the uptown silk-stocking section) and he had "good breeding"--he was the scion of a 150-year-old Creole family. But a handsome playboy who moves in a fast crowd is hardly the type of candidate business leaders generally seek to represent their interests in the city government. One must keep in mind, in trying to understand why Morrison was drafted for the position, that no one else wanted to run and that Maestri was considered to be a shoo-in. No one, of course, knew what "the women" could accomplish. And no one knew what they were getting when they elected Morrison. What they got was a non-local, a man with a burning ambition to become President some day. With his city in crisis in the late fifties and in 1960, Morrison was pursuing the governorship of a segregationist state and taking the stance that he thought would enhance that personal goal. By contrast, the mayor of Atlanta was completely a local with little time for anything but the city's business and no ambitions beyond the mayor's office.

Oddly enough, though Maestri was Long's man, the anti-Long business leaders seemed quite content with him and even praised the wisdom of those who declined to battle him. All it took was a little conservatism on Maestri's part to wed the anti-Long economic elites of New Orleans to the machine that, throughout the thirties, had plundered the city and destroyed self-government in New Orleans. The New Orleans economic elites withdrew from the political battle front for two decades, until after Morrison was elected by the clubwomen.

The failure of the elite to play major roles in politics is equally pronounced in the school board elections. When the Independent Women's Organization began its drive to reform the schools, they were unable to find any man who would run for the board, and had to elect Mrs. Jackie Leonard instead. Later on they were able to recruit men, but in general these were men active in the middle-class clubs, rather than in the circles of the elite.

Related to this withdrawal from politics is the fact that the elite seem to have only a mild interest in such matters as economic development. The drive to develop the Port was spearheaded by Morrison, and one respondent remarked that in that effort Morrison brought the economic leaders together in a concerted campaign for economic development for the first time. It is of course difficult to know why New Orleans has been unable to attract new industry, but whatever the reason, New Orleans does not have a strong "booster" spirit or any strong organizations committed to attracting industry.

Without this strong interest in economic development, the proponents of peaceful desegregation could gain little leverage by threatening the elite with "another Little Rock." In Atlanta, the mayor hired a management consultant firm to produce a report on the failure of new plants to move to Little Rock, and the report was a best-seller among the elite. In New Orleans, a Little Rock businessman was brought into the city, only to discover that no one wanted to hear him.

Finally we arrive at the conclusion that, whatever the reason, the New Orleans elite is simply more traditional than the elite of Atlanta or Baton Rouge. In many ways, New Orleans is dominated by its old wealth. In an effort to pursue the implications of this, we asked six members of the civic elite--including three of the four men most frequently as named as influentials--how long they had lived in New Orleans and how they felt about the city. Four of the six volunteered the information that their family had been in New Orleans for over a century; two of them added that "money means little in New Orleans," and they unanimously praised New Orleans for its "way of life"--its "pleasant and gracious" set of social relations. If they were critical of New Orleans, it was only of the climate, and the one man who complained that the city was resistant to change was also the one man who was not named as one of the elite.

In some of these interviews, we brought up the subject of Atlanta and Houston--New Orleans' two rival cities. (In 1920, New Orleans was larger than Houston and Atlanta combined; if present trends continue, however, it will soon be the smallest of the three.) It was here that the comment that money was unimportant in New Orleans became relevant. The two rival cities are considered to be not truly southern cities; they are money-grubbing, ruled by the nouveau riche, and made repugnant by their brashness and boosterism, their lack of culture and civility. As one top influential put it: "Yes, but who'd want to live there?"

In cities like Atlanta and Houston, money and achieved status count for everything. But in New Orleans, being a native and coming from a good family count for everything. New Orleans is thus an anachronism--a traditionalist society in mid-twentieth-century America. We find attitudes in New Orleans which were prevalent in the traditionalist societies of the nineteenth-century South, the most obvious of which is a resistance to new ideas and new values. Since new values are brought in by new wealth and by outsiders, the economic elite of New Orleans is predictably not as hospitable to new industry as the elite in other southern cities. We saw a dramatic illustration of this point when we learned of some real estate speculators and contractors with ambitious plans for downtown New Orleans. They were either northerners or came from working-class origins, and thus they have found New Orleans a very unfriendly city. A second attitude inherent in the traditionalist ideology is aloofness from politics and governmental affairs. To the nineteenth-century capitalist, his business was more important than government (unless he wanted to buy a city streetcar franchise). A third attitude typical of the southern traditionalist is so obvious that we might almost overlook it here--racial prejudice. We can report that the economic elite of New Orleans scored low on our race-liberalism scale. But we may find a more concrete example of the ramifications of prejudice in the elite if we recall that the Times-Picayune (whose publisher and editor were both listed as influentials) could not decide which would be a worse disaster--integration or closing the schools. Another of the top leaders refused to support the school board because the school toilets would be unsegregated.

There were three groups of people in New Orleans who had power which could have been used to prevent the breakdown of social control, and each of these groups used too little influence too late to prevent the crisis. The school board waited until the last possible moment to begin a campaign to keep the schools open, and even then they were hesitant to commit themselves. The elected officials kept a minimum amount of law and order and used little of their influence on the state legislature. The civic elite did not act at all on the issue of race until January, although it did lend its support to the Sutherland campaign. For each group there is an explanation: the school board was insecure and conservative on racial matters; Mayor Morrison had an eye on the governor's mansion; the civic elite was traditional and aloof from civic activity and politics. Furthermore, these are not three random factors which happened to coincide. The school board was weak because it did not include the first-line civic elite (such as those who serve in Columbus), the second-line elite (as in Montgomery), or even the third-line elite (as in Atlanta). If Morrison was ambitious, it must be added that only one who was ambitious would have been willing to undertake a last-minute campaign against the Maestri machine.

New Orleans is politically disorganized almost to the point of having a power vacuum. The one well-organized group with money, prestige, control over communications, and technical skill is the civic elite--and it has taken little more than a casual interest in city politics. The city had been reformed, true; but the most powerful political organization behind this reform was a collection of women's clubs.

CHAPTER IV

THE CORRELATES OF PEACE

Up to this point, we have analyzed New Orleans as if it were a single case study, with only casual and unsystematic references to other cities. In this chapter we shall try to defend some of our hypotheses about New Orleans by making systematic comparisons between New Orleans and all seven cities in our sample.

In Chapter I we suggested that the southern school system desegregating in the period after massive resistance had four problems: to delay desegregation, to avoid being labeled integrationist, to promote a favorable climate for peaceful desegregation, and to prevent intervention by the state. New Orleans does not differ very much from the other southern cities in our sample in resolving two of these problems. It did attempt to prevent state intervention; it is a matter of debate whether any other city could have prevented the Louisiana state legislature from interfering. Second, it delayed desegregation as much as possible, but so did other cities such as Atlanta and even Columbus. New Orleans does differ in its handling of the other two problems, however. First, the school board members went to greater lengths to maintain their reputation as segregationists. Second, the city failed to produce a local climate favorable to peaceful desegregation.

A Measure of Acquiescence

We shall continue to call our main variable acquiescence, just as we did in our study of the North. But it should be clear that we are now studying a different issue--that acquiescence will be defined differently and will correlate with other variables in new ways. Acquiescence will have two components: first, willingness to desegregate (or willingness to take the risk of being labeled integrationist), and second, ability to mobilize the community to maintain law and order.

Among the three cities which were first in their state to desegregate--Miami, Atlanta, and New Orleans--it seems clear that Miami was the most willing to accept integration and New Orleans the least so. Montgomery and Baton Rouge were both faced with the issue soon after disorder had resulted from desegregation in the first city in their state. Montgomery's suit was filed in 1964, and its school board did not appeal the first decision handed down. It is not clear whether Montgomery would have been successful in delaying desegregation by appeals, but in any case it did not bother and desegregated only a few months after the suit was first filed. Baton Rouge, on the other hand, delayed desegregation through a long series of appeals, so that it did not integrate any schools until four years after New Orleans. But Baton Rouge did mobilize a campaign to defeat the school board members who had been appointed when the board was packed by Governor Davis. Thus we would rank Montgomery as more willing to desegregate than Baton Rouge, and Baton Rouge higher than some other cities. Columbus and Jacksonville were faced with a much less difficult decision. Both cities desegregated late and were in states which had had no previous difficulty. Columbus was under instruction from the federal government to desegregate or lose a considerable amount of "impacted area" money. This was a relatively new situation in the South, and Columbus did not know precisely what the government would do if its bluff were called. Thus we could expect Columbus to stall a bit before surrendering. The federal officials agreed to a one-year wait before desegregation. Jacksonville was less willing to comply; it managed to delay a court decision with repeated appeals.

It is difficult to put all this together in a rank ordering, but after considerable staff discussion, and a good deal more disagreement than we faced in ranking the northern cities, we produced the following ranking:

Willingness To Desegregate	First City in State	Second City in State	"Later" City
1	Miami		
2-3 . . .	Atlanta	Montgomery	
4-5 . . .		Baton Rouge	Columbus
6-7 . . .	New Orleans		Jacksonville

The ranking places those cities which had the most violence at the bottom. Columbus took only routine steps to prepare for integration, although the support of the county political leaders was recruited; Jacksonville mobilized very little public support; we have already seen how much difficulty

New Orleans had. On the other hand, Baton Rouge, Montgomery, and Atlanta all went to considerable lengths to insure that desegregation would be peaceful. (Miami seemed to feel--correctly--that there was little danger of violence there, so its preparations were not as extensive.) All this indicates that we can treat acquiescence as approximately unidimensional--that whatever factors cause a school board to accept desegregation easily also lead to the successful mobilization of the community. Thus we have the ranking of acquiescence shown in Table IV.1.

TABLE IV.1

RANKING OF SOUTHERN CITIES BY ACQUIESCENCE

1	Miami
2-3	Atlanta, Montgomery
4-5	Baton Rouge, Columbus
6	Jacksonville
7	New Orleans

In the North we found that one quite good correlate of acquiescence was the liberalism of the board members' attitudes toward civil rights and the civil rights movement. A similar scale of liberalism was constructed from interviews with thirty-nine board members, 65 per cent of the total number. As in the North, we made no attempt to interview most of the others; there were only a small number of refusals. As was also done in the North, those board members who were not interviewed were rated on liberalism so that a median score for the entire board could be developed. Unfortunately, the staff's efforts to predict the liberalism of southern board members were much less successful than their predictions of the northerners--Q was only +.52 between the staff's ratings and actual scores. However, the actual scores on the attitude scale ranged over a wider segment of the scale, so the medians are still fairly reliable. The ranking of each school board by median race-liberalism score is shown in Table IV.2 and is plotted against acquiescence in Figure IV.1. The race-liberalism scale ranges from 0 to 15.

TABLE IV.2

RANKING OF SOUTHERN CITIES BY RACE LIBERALISM OF THEIR SCHOOL BOARDS

	Median Score
1. Miami	11.5
2. Atlanta	7
3. Jacksonville	6
4. Columbus	5
5. Baton Rouge	4
6. New Orleans	3.5
7. Montgomery	2

The rank-order correlation is a rather poor .44, indicating that liberalism on race has little to do with acquiescence in at least some of the cities. Of course, the obvious reason why liberalism is not a better correlate is that the school board is not autonomous in making decisions about desegregation; some of these boards were directly under the influence of political and economic leaders. But before turning to these influences, let us see how much we can explain by looking at two other characteristics of school boards.

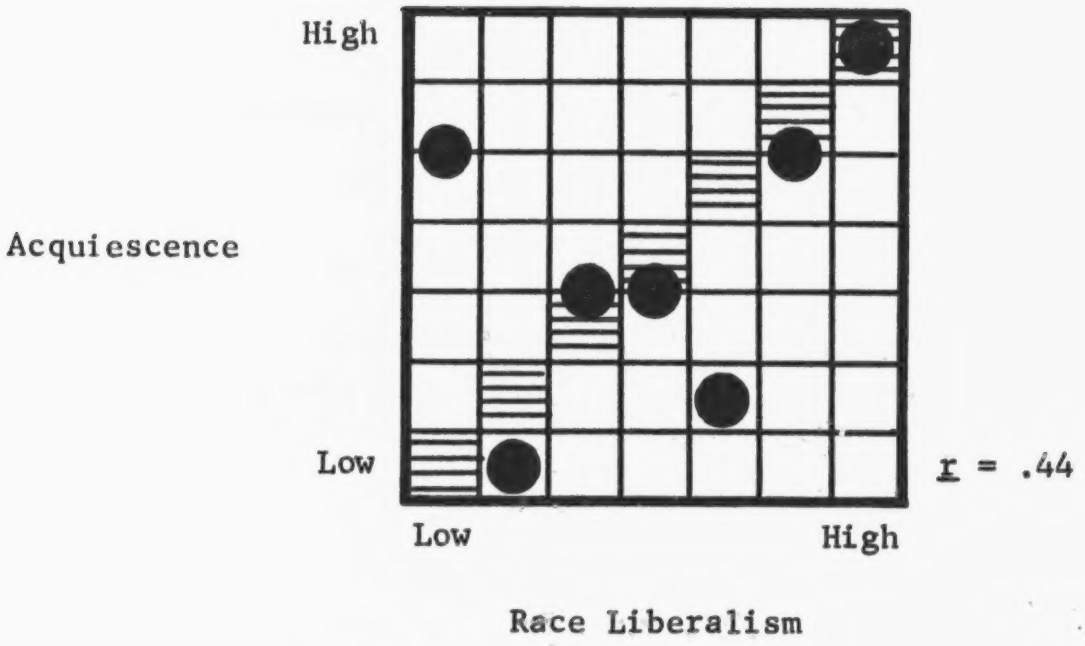

Figure IV.1.--Acquiescence and Median Race-Liberalism Scores of School Boards.

Given the way we have described the problems confronting these school boards, it seems logical that liberalism on race is not the only important attitude variable. The school board which decides to press for peaceful desegregation need not agree that desegregation is desirable, but it must take considerable risk: it must be willing to alienate the "rednecks," to be insulted personally, to run the danger of social ostracism or even physical attack. This suggests that the attitude which we have called conflict tolerance will correlate with acquiescence. The two components of conflict tolerance are a lack of constant orientation toward one's constituency and a belief that disagreements are not simply a matter of misunderstanding.[1] Both these attitudes are correlated with race liberalism. In addition, both seem to be characteristics of the kind of board member who would be willing to act to insure peaceful desegregation despite real or imagined personal risks. Such a board member recognizes the necessity of sometimes making unpopular decisions and the legitimacy of conflict and disagreement.

The third board characteristic which should correlate with acquiescence is socio-economic status. In the North we found that board members of high status were more liberal. We also think that board members of high status are in less danger of losing their prestige (and hence are more willing to take risks) and are better able to mobilize community support for their position. Unfortunately we cannot readily test this hypothesis, because most of the school boards are very similar in social status. The boards of Baton Rouge and Jacksonville are obviously of lower status, but the other five boards are quite close to each other. The median incomes of the members of the five higher-status boards are all between $25,000 and $30,000. Most of these board members are attorneys, bankers, or businessmen; a few are physicians and dentists. Thus all five of the boards seem to be made up of men who are of fairly high status but generally are not influential outside the area of education. (Only Columbus has any members who are recognized as generally influential.)

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[1] The questions on which this scale is based are in agree-disagree form: (1) A politician's first duty is to represent the views of his constituency. (2) A school administrator's job is to give the community the kind of school system that the public wants. (3) If people really understood the issues, there would be no disagreement over school policy.

With only seven cases it is difficult to unravel the interrelationships between conflict tolerance, social status, race liberalism, and acquiescence. In Table IV.3 we present the rank ordering of the boards by conflict tolerance and socio-economic status; we repeat the rankings for race liberalism and acquiescence for comparison. In Table IV.4 we present the matrix of rank-order correlations between the four factors.

TABLE IV.3

RANKING OF SCHOOL BOARDS OF SOUTHERN CITIES BY CONFLICT TOLERANCE, SOCIAL STATUS, RACE LIBERALISM, AND ACQUIESCENCE

City	Conflict Tolerance	Social Status	Race Liberalism	Acquiescence
Atlanta	1	1	2	2.5
Montgomery . . .	2	4.5	7	2.5
Columbus	3	2.5	4	4.5
Miami	4	2.5	1	1
Jacksonville . .	5	6	3	6
Baton Rouge . .	6	7	5	4.5
New Orleans . .	7	4.5	6	7

TABLE IV.4

RANK-ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CONFLICT TOLERANCE, SOCIAL STATUS, RACE LIBERALISM, AND ACQUIESCENCE OF SCHOOL BOARDS

	Social Status	Race Liberalism	Acquiescence
Conflict tolerance . . .	.69	.24	.69
Social status		.51	.69
Race liberalism			.44

With seven cases, a correlation of .71 is necessary to reach the .05 level of significance (one-tailed test).

As Table IV.4 indicates, race liberalism correlates poorly with the other three variables, while the other three correlate moderately well. Conflict tolerance, at the individual level, is a good predictor of liberalism; therefore we particularly expect the correlation between conflict tolerance and liberalism at the board level to be very high. In reality, it is not. The apparent problem is that race liberalism is affected by the culture of the region in which the city is located. In Figure IV.2 we plot conflict tolerance against liberalism, identifying the cities, and we see that the deviations are systematic. The two Florida boards are more liberal than we expected, the two Louisiana boards are slightly more liberal, the two Georgia boards more conservative, and the Alabama board much more conservative. The obvious explanation is that these four states vary in attitudinal climate--Florida being most liberal, Louisiana next, Georgia third, and Alabama last--and that a board with a particular predisposition toward liberalism would be more liberal if it were transplanted into a more liberal state. If our hypothesis is correct, it explains why liberalism is such a poor predictor of acquiescence, for acquiescence was partly defined relative to state norms. Once we make this assumption the other correlations become more plausible. The correlation between social status and race liberalism is only .51 (again with systematic deviations by state), and social status correlates reasonably well with conflict tolerance ($\underline{r}$ = .69). This suggests that some combination of liberalism with conflict tolerance or social status will yield a better prediction of acquiescence. If we combine either status and liberalism or conflict tolerance and liberalism, a similar rank ordering is produced. Because of the unreliability of the status ranking, the conflict-tolerance scores were used. In Figure IV.3, we show the plot of conflict tolerance and liberalism against acquiescence. Even here, with two of our predictors of acquiescence combined, the rank-order correlation is only .67.

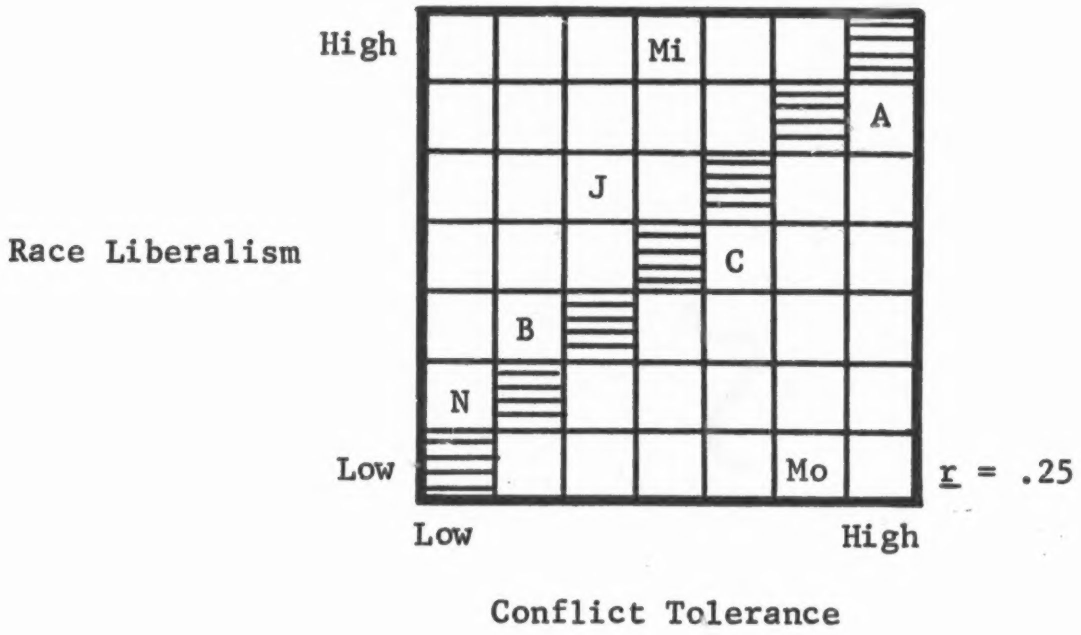

Figure IV.2.--Conflict Tolerance and Liberalism. A--Atlanta; B--Baton Rouge; C--Columbus; J--Jacksonville; Mi--Miami; Mo--Montgomery; N--New Orleans.

These correlations are not very high, and we suspect that there is some other factor operating here. The figure suggests that we should consider the role played by the civic and political elite groups. The correlation would be close to perfect if it were not for Montgomery and

Baton Rouge,[2] and these are the two cities where the civic elite's intervention in school desegregation was most obvious. The less autonomous is the action of the board, the less accurately do the board characteristics predict the outcome.

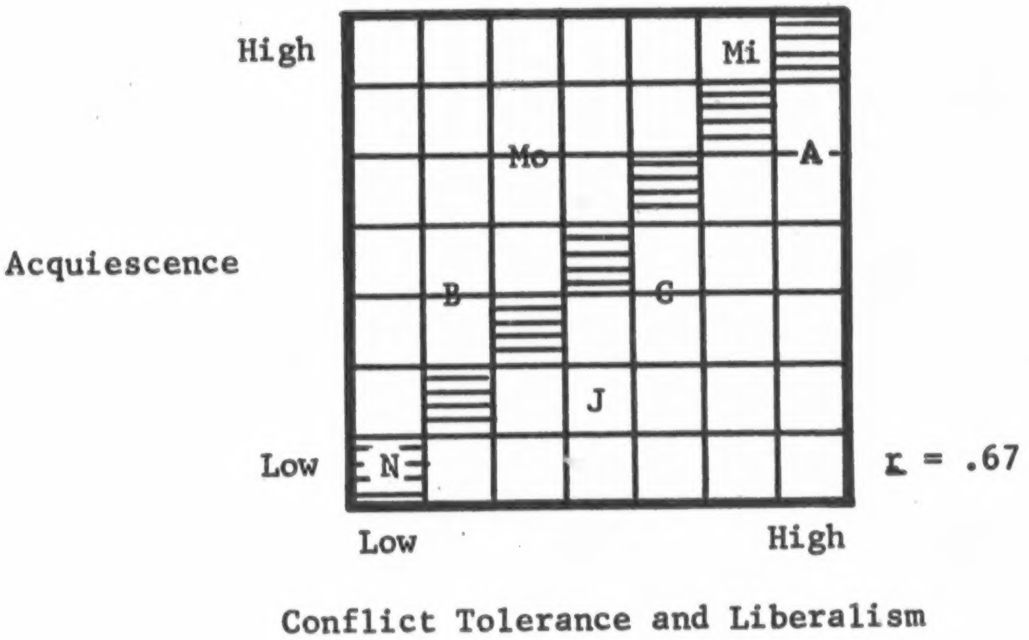

Figure IV.3.--Acquiescence and the Combined Ranking of Conflict Tolerance and Liberalism. A--Atlanta; B--Baton Rouge; C--Columbus; J--Jacksonville; Mi--Miami; Mo--Montgomery; N--New Orleans.

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[2] The remaining five are in the following order: Miami, Atlanta, Columbus, Jacksonville, New Orleans.

This brings us to our first hypothesis: that conflict tolerance, high social status, and liberalism are school board characteristics which produce acquiescence, to the extent that the school desegregation is a school problem rather than a community-wide problem, and the board is autonomous in making decisions on desegregation. However, our data do not permit any statement about the relative importance of these three factors or the extent to which the three taken together provide a complete explanation of acquiescence. There may or may not be other factors which are also important.

The Influence of the Civic and Political Elite

So far we have seen one reason why New Orleans had difficulty with the school desegregation issue; compared to the other cities in our sample, it had a school board which was more conservative and of lower status. The New Orleans board did move slowly and to some extent timidly, but this does not sufficiently explain the entire catastrophe. The board did make an effort. Meanwhile, the school board in Montgomery, which is also of relatively low status and is definitely conservative, experienced no difficulty. The most important difference between these two cities is that the civic and political leaders in New Orleans did nothing, while those in Montgomery came in, uninvited, to make sure that desegregation came off smoothly.

Let us take a look at the seven cities again, this time concentrating on the role of the civic and political elite. There are three basic questions here. First, what is the direct contact between the school board and

and the elite? Second, to what extent did the elite participate in the decision? And third, what was the ideological position of the elite?

Columbus

Columbus has the most traditional economy of all our cities. The major industries are locally owned and have been established for nearly a century. The owners and managers of these industries constitute a well-organized leadership group, which has considerable influence on local politics. The Muskogee County school board is appointed by the grand jury and is made up of men of uniformly high status. When asked to name the local influentials, four board members named thirty persons, and seven of these persons were school board members.

Race relations in Columbus are generally considered good, despite the fact that a leading civil rights leader was shot to death in Columbus a few years ago. The elite of the white community is mirrored in a group of five Negro civic leaders, so that many civil rights issues are handled through contact between these two groups. Columbus has never had a strong direct-action civil rights movement.

In the school desegregation issue, the most important fact about Columbus is that it is the site of the huge Fort Benning army base. During the first part of 1963 the federal government began pressing for desegregation of "impacted areas." First, the Justice Department prepared to file suit and let a copy of their brief get into the hands of the school board. Second, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare sent a representative to meet with the board and inform them of the federal government's intention to construct a high school on the military base and withdraw military children (and therefore federal funds) from the school system if it did not desegregate. The school board representatives agreed to desegregate in September of 1964--fifteen months after the meeting. During the next three months, the board leadership persuaded the other members to support desegregation, and a plan was unanimously adopted in September, 1963.

It is hard to know how much choice the school system had. It could have accepted the loss of federal funds. Or it could have attempted to delay desegregation further, although it is unlikely that such a delay would have had much success.

The Muskogee County school board, with its excellent ties to a strong civic elite, had little difficulty maintaining social control during desegregation. It also had little difficulty dealing with non-legal federal intervention, a situation which was relatively new in the South. Despite this, the Columbus school board was very reluctant to desegregate and delayed action for what would seem to be the longest period of time possible. The most plausible explanation for this is that the Columbus civic elite is more tradition-oriented, and more strongly opposed to integration, than the elite in some of the other cities.

Jacksonville

Jacksonville did not desegregate until 1963--four years after Miami, and after eight smaller school systems in the state had done so. The court suit was not pushed aggressively, and the board took every delaying action possible. When desegregation came, the board took some limited action to insure peaceful desegregation. When one Negro mother sought to send her child to a "cracker" school, the school system attempted to dissuade her, without success. Her home was then bombed. This was the only incidence of violence.

There are interesting similarities between the Jacksonville and New Orleans situations. In both cases, the school board resisted integration as much as possible and wished to avoid taking an active role in insuring peaceful desegregation; and in both cases the political and civic leaders stayed clear of the school desegregation issue. Indeed, we have the impression that if Jacksonville had been the first city to desegregate in Florida, and if the Florida state legislature had attempted to intervene, the crisis might have been worse here than in New Orleans.

If we examine the Jacksonville school system and its relationship to local politics, we see immediately why the school board played a passive role, and why the city does not have the sort of civic elite that Atlanta and Montgomery have.

Jacksonville's government has a certain flavor of the late nineteenth century about it. There is a very weak civic elite in the city, and individual industrial firms work in a particularistic manner to obtain tax benefits and other favors from the government. Despite several reforms, the government retains an archaic, formal structure. For example, in 1964 the following bodies were involved in school desegregation decision-making for the Duval County school system: the school board, composed of five members elected from wards in partisan elections; the superintendent of schools, who was also elected on a partisan ballot; and the board of school trustees, composed of three members elected at large (partisan). After these three bodies prepare a budget, it is approved by the country budget commission and then by the county commissioners. Noninstructional employment is handled by the city's civil service commission, which is also a political body. In addition to this complex structure, the electorate is politically immature. For example, when one of the school board members ran for the assessor's office on a platform of raising taxes, the Negro vote (traditionally a source of support for increased taxes in the U.S.) was given to his opponent.

Although the recently reformed Duval county school board was moderately liberal, it had relatively little influence over political leaders and, because the superintendent was elected, little influence over the school system itself. In 1965, the financial difficulties of the schools became so intense that the schools lost their accreditation. Following this the school board was enlarged, the superintendency was converted to an appointive post, and a general reform of the tax-assessment process was begun. But it was clear that pressures for reform would have had much less impact without the loss of accreditation.

There are several possible explanations for the unusual political structure of Jacksonville. Other cities in Florida have had corruption and inefficiency in government, but Jacksonville has resisted reform more than they have. One explanation is that Jacksonville has been for many years a major railroad center, and the railroads are heavily committed to maintaining low taxes. Several respondents felt that the heavy intervention of the railroad interests in local politics was a fundamental factor in maintaining Jacksonville's political style.

New Orleans

There is no point in repeating our previous discussion of New Orleans, except to note several points. First, the school board is a "reform" board, but the reformers were not directly part of the civic elite--the Girls draw much of their strength through voluntary organizations, rather than through the direct use of community prestige. There is a clear civic leadership group, but it proved to be quite conservative on racial matters. Consequently, New Orleans did not form a public biracial committee, and the civic elite did not lend their support to efforts to keep the schools functioning.

New Orleans, like Jacksonville and Columbus, has a traditional elite. In Columbus this has resulted in a patrician control of government, but in New Orleans and Jacksonville it has led to a bifurcation between the elite as a class and politics, which is mass-based.

Montgomery

Montgomery tends to have a tradition of mass politics, but it is not as extreme as either New Orleans or Jacksonville. Several members of the school board have ties to the civic and political elite, but the elite is not generally able to "control" all the school board seats or the mayor's office. The main division in local politics is between the high-status South Side and the low-status and rural East Side. The economic leaders have had relatively little influence on race relations, with the result that race relations have not been very good in Montgomery. The city became famous first for the long bus boycott, then as the scene of the mauling of the freedom riders who attempted to integrate the bus station. Finally, attempts to integrate the city parks led to their being closed down. One of our informants, a prominent businessman, commented that the government "listened to advice from the wrong persons" when it closed the parks. In 1964, however, Montgomery had learned its lesson, and several prominent businessmen organized a biracial commission. The white members of the commission in effect took charge of school desegregation. All three of the city commissioners (including the mayor who had closed the parks and the police commissioner who had been accused of permitting the freedom riders to be attacked) served on the biracial commission. Under the leadership of the business elite, a very thorough campaign was undertaken to insure peaceful desegregation, and Montgomery received favorable national publicity for its efforts.

Atlanta

Atlanta has earned a reputation as the leader of the new South. It is frequently said that the main reasons for Atlanta's achievement is the successful coalition of the business leadership and the Negro voters against the "rednecks" and the state legislature. While Atlanta does not have as definite a power structure as New Orleans, it is considerably more visible. In one interview, a leading governmental advisor answered our query for the names of influentials by asking his secretary to "bring in the power structure list." In part this is self-consciousness due to the existence of Floyd Hunter's study of the city, but it is also a reflection of the political style. The school board was reformed in the late 1950's, and new board members were elected and a new superintendent hired. The board members represent the interests of the civic elite but are not in themselves top influentials in the city; consequently the schools did not receive much attention from the elite until desegregation. The school board delayed desegregation through appeals until 1961, but it was still the first city to desegregate in the hard-core area of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. Although the inside story of who influenced whom is unknown, it seems clear that Atlanta business leaders and Mayor William B. Hartsfield were in close contact with Governor Ernest Vandiver, who was a committed segregationist. The result was the appointment of a commission, headed by Atlanta banker John A. Sibley, which in effect lobbied successfully throughout the state for "local option"--meaning in this case that the state would not interfere in Atlanta's school system. This was the major hurdle. In addition, Atlanta citizens had already organized HOPE (a save-the-schools committee similar to SOS of New Orleans, but with more influence) and the police, clergy, and Chamber of Commerce all committed themselves to preserving the peace.

All this fits with Atlanta's basic orientation toward race relations, which springs from the attitude that good race relations are necessary in order to attract new industry. (Atlanta leaders usually express this by saying "we are too busy to hate.")

Miami

Miami desegregated voluntarily, although a suit was in court at the time. Governor Collins had privately urged several Florida school boards to desegregate in order to maintain the legality of the state pupil placement law, but none of the boards agreed to do so. However, in 1957, the Miami school board was expanded from five to seven members, and the governor, who makes appointments to vacancies on the Miami board, appointed two moderates. Governor Collins appointed one other moderate before desegregation, and after desegregation one of the seats was captured by a committed liberal, apparently with Collins' blessing.

Thus we see that Miami resembles a northern board in that the board is autonomous but with its political outlook determined by the appointment process. The board has close ties to liberal members of the civic elite, but the elite seems to be more pluralistic in structure than in the other southern cities.

Baton Rouge

Much of what was said about Atlanta applies to Baton Rouge as well. The city is in the midst of an economic boom, and the business leadership of the city is committed to maintaining economic growth. At the same time that the state legislature was trying to take over control of the Orleans Parish school board, a bill was passed enlarging the East Baton Rouge Parish board (which serves the city of Baton Rouge) from seven to eleven members. The four new members were appointed by the governor and were diehard segregationists. They served until the next school board election, at which time Baton Rouge revolted and these members were defeated and replaced by four men committed to keeping the schools open. The Baton Rouge representative who had introduced the bill to pack the school board was also defeated by a combination of Negro and middle-class white votes. This was the last effort of the state to interfere with the school desegregation issue in Baton Rouge. In March, 1963, the board was ordered to desegregate. On April 4 a "declaration of principles" entitled "The Law Is Clear" was published in the Baton Rouge Morning Advocate. The paid advertisement bore four hundred signatures, including most of the business, professional, and labor leaders, and made a direct appeal for peaceful desegregation in order to maintain the economic boom. At the same time, a biracial commission was formed. Like the commission in Montgomery, and unlike that in New Orleans, it was a public body. The white members of the biracial commission have close connections to the men who would probably be designated as top influentials in Baton Rouge.

Interpretation

Admittedly, we have ignored many important factors in making this hurried comparison, but we think that we have seen, as we did in the North, that the civic elite is an important factor. In the North, city government is more pluralistic, and the civic elite has relatively little direct influence on school integration. However, in these southern cities (with the possible exception of the two cities in Florida) it is relatively easy for the economic leaders to exert a great deal of influence on this decision. The major question is whether they are willing to do so--their degree of access to the school board is of less importance. In part this difference between desegregation in the North and in the South is a difference in the nature of the issue. Southern school desegregation involves a single decision, with a narrow range of alternatives; the school integration question in the North is more complex, and not as obviously important. But there is also a real difference between the structures of the northern and southern cities.

In none of the northern cities would a respondent produce a "power structure" list. In fact, many of our northern respondents objected to our stressing the role of the civic elite.

In all these cities except Baton Rouge we can locate at least one board member who has ties to the top economic leaders. In Atlanta, the board is made up of the second- and third-level elite groups; in Columbus, the top elite group. In Montgomery at least two of the board members are accepted members of the elite group. In Miami at least two of the liberal board members are close to local civic leaders. In New Orleans none of the board members are of particularly high status, but they have contacts with the elite through the Girls. In Jacksonville, one board member is a high official in local industry. Only in Baton Rouge is the board not visibly connected to the economic leadership, and this did not prevent a good working relationship there.

Thus the question is, why does the elite want to influence the school desegregation decision in certain cities and not in others? The answer seems to be quite simply that these elite groups differ in ideology. Recall that in the North, we talked about a common denominator--peace, prosperity, reform, and welfare--around which the elite in any city could unify. The implication was that an executive could move from one city to another and be immediately at home in civic affairs. This is probably not the case in the South. One New Orleans leader made it clear that he felt that Atlanta was pursuing false values in throwing away the traditions of the South to make money. The New Orleans leadership is a group which would constitute the "society" rather than the "civic elite" in a northern city.

Another way the difference in the values of these southern cities appears is in the integration of the city into state politics. Atlanta makes no bones about its permanent conflict with the state. An Atlanta mayor would not consider for a moment the possibility of running for governor, nor would he have much chance of election. But mayors in both New Orleans and Jacksonville have run for the governor's office. A mayor cannot represent the interest of a major city which is concerned with economic development and at the same time accept the traditional southern values and develop the rural and small-town support necessary to run for a state office. Of course, if New Orleans were completely traditional in outlook, there would have been little objection to Morrison's running for governor. But a group of New Orleans leaders did attempt to dissuade him. (This group was nicknamed "the Coldwater Committee.")

Unfortunately, we do not have the data necessary to rank the cities in the traditionalism of their civic elite groups, and we will only divide the cities into three broad categories. Columbus, Jacksonville, and New Orleans fall on the traditional side, since family background plays an important role, and interest in economic development a less important role, in the activity of the elite. Miami, Baton Rouge, and Atlanta, on the other hand, are cities with a "developing" or "modernizing" elite. Montgomery does not fall definitely into either category, and we shall leave it in an intermediate cell. The access which the elites have to the school board is a less important factor; it can be roughly measured by simply taking the socioeconomic status of the board: the higher the status, the closer the board's ties to the elite. In Table IV.5 we have ranked the cities by placing the "modernizing elite" cities at the top and the "traditional elite" cities at the bottom, and then, within each group, placing the boards of higher status at the top. We shall refer to this variable by the cumbersome title "elite ideology and influence." As Figure IV.4 indicates, this is a better predictor of acquiescence than any of the school board characteristics which we considered earlier.

TABLE IV.5

RANKING OF CITIES BY ELITE IDEOLOGY AND INFLUENCE

City	Ideology	Status Rank
1. Atlanta	Modernizing	1
2. Miami	Modernizing	2.5
3. Baton Rouge	Modernizing	7
4. Montgomery	Intermediate	4.5
5. Columbus	Traditional	2.5
6. New Orleans	Traditional	4.5
7. Jacksonville	Traditional	6

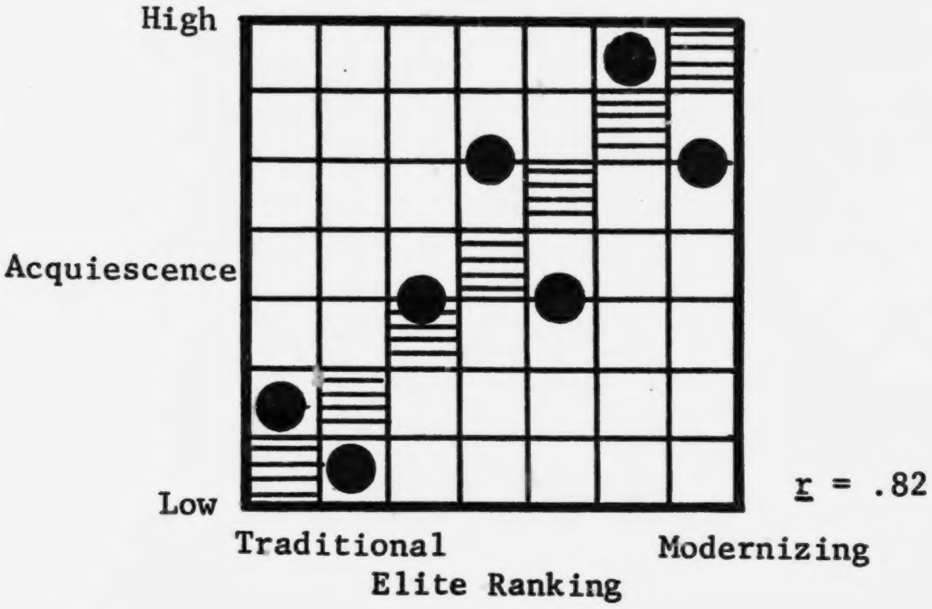

Figure IV.4.--Acquiescence by Elite Ideology and Influence

This brings us to our last question: Can we determine any factor which will predict whether a city will have a modernizing or a traditional elite? The answer is that we can, but the factor is a trivial one; modernizing cities are experiencing economic growth, while traditional cities are not. The Census provides us with two measures of development. A growing economy will require a growing labor force and will tend to attract better-educated workers. These two measures--the growth rate of the metropolitan area and the educational level of the population--are given in Table IV.6.

TABLE IV.6

GROWTH RATE AND EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE SOUTHERN CITIES

Classification of Elite	Growth Rate of Metropolitan Area, 1950-60 (Per Cent)	Education (Median Number Years of Schooling)
Modernizing:		
Baton Rouge	45.5	11.9
Miami	88.9	11.5
Atlanta	39.9	11.1
Intermediate:		
Montgomery	21.8	11.2
Traditional:		
Jacksonville	49.8	10.8
Columbus	27.8	9.6
New Orleans	26.7	9.5

The two Florida cities have quite high growth rates, of course, but even here Jacksonville's is much lower than Miami's. Since many of these new residents are not members of the labor force, or are employed in servicing retired persons, Jacksonville's growth rate does not necessarily indicate a large increase in industrial employment. Montgomery's high educational attainment, like Baton Rouge, is partly a reflection of the number of government employees--both cities are state capitals. However, even if this were corrected in some way, it is unlikely that the educational level would drop to that of New Orleans or Columbus.

The character of the civic elite, combined with the character of the school board, produces a fairly good predictor of acquiescence in our seven cities. While the rank-order correlation of the best board characteristics (the combination of conflict tolerance and liberalism) yielded a rank-order correlation with acquiescence of only .67, the "elite ideology and influence" ranking produces a correlation of .82, and we can combine both dimensions to produce a correlation with acquiescence as high as .85. The magnitude of these correlations suggests that our analysis of the South has not been as successful as our study of the North was. This may be simply because our estimates of the variables are poorer in the South, but we are inclined to think that in fact we have not been as successful in understanding the interrelationships between factors.

Correlates of Board Recruitment Patterns

We have one additional question which should be raised: What are the community characteristics which produce liberal, conflict-tolerant, or high-status boards? Unfortunately we do not have a good answer to this question, but we can make the following points. Columbus, the only appointed board in the sample, is high in status and in conflict tolerance. If it is not as high in status as Atlanta's board, this is partly because even the top elite of a small city like this one may not hold extremely high economic positions, and partly because it is a large board with a rural representation. While we do not have data on other cities, it seems likely that most southern appointed boards would be influenced by the elite. Few southern cities have political parties strong enough to make the appointment of low-status professional politicians possible. The southern cities resemble the two west-coast cities in our northern sample, in that there is no sharp distinction between professional politicians and the civic elite. Thus even if appointments were made on a strictly partisan basis, they would probably include some persons of high status, as Lawndale's board does.[3]

Suppose, then, that we drop Columbus from the sample and look at the six elected boards. Figure IV.5 shows us that large cities tend to have boards of higher status: the correlation is .49. (In order to allow for the stability of political style and the fact that school board candidates are usually middle-aged with long-term local residence, we have used the 1940 population statistics.) Looking at Figure IV.5 we see that the two large cites of high status are Atlanta and Miami, while the two large cities of lower status are New Orleans and Jacksonville. Both Atlanta and Miami have reformed their school boards in the last decade, replacing appointees of lower status with persons closer to the civic elite. In addition, both cities have what we have called "modernizing elites." In contrast, although New Orleans and Jacksonville have also undergone reform, in neither case were their resulting boards of particularly high status. The reformers in New Orleans and Jacksonville slated businessmen who had organizational involvements which would give them grass-roots political support, but who were not intimately connected with the civic elite (there are exceptions, of course, but this is the general pattern). In Atlanta the original reform movement included top leaders, and the reform resulted in appointees of high status; later, these same leaders backed the schools during a successful desegregation campaign. We should recall here that the original reform in New Orleans was led by that peculiar political body called the Girls, whose contacts with the elite were more limited; the movement had its base in the middle-class grass roots. The result was a board quite different from Atlanta's, with members who were of slightly lower status, were not as closely tied to the elite, and showed less conflict tolerance.

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[3] Lawndale is a pseudonym for this particular city. See our northern report for its description.

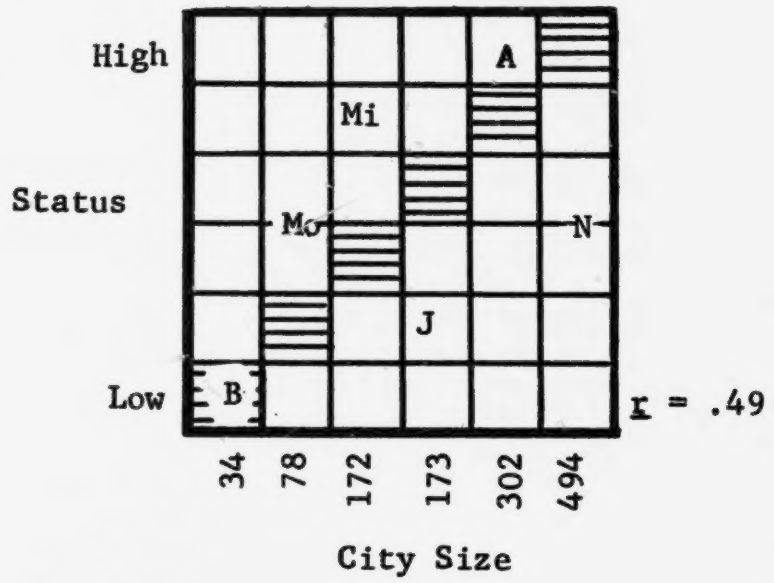

Figure IV.5.--Size of City (1940 Population, in Thousands) and Social Status of Elected School Board. A--Atlanta; B--Baton Rouge; J--Jacksonville; Mi--Miami, Mo--Montgomery; N--New Orleans.

This suggests that three factors explain the presence of a board of high status: city size, the presence of a "modernizing elite," and whether the board is appointed or elected. After excluding Columbus (the appointive board) and combining elite ideology and city size into one scale, our rank-order correlation with status is .70 and our rank-order correlation with conflict tolerance and race liberalism combined is .77. Thus we do have at least a partial explanation for the differences in the school boards.

Summary

In the North we saw that the school desegregation issue was complex and ambiguous, that the school board tended to be autonomous, and that community characteristics tended to affect the outcome of the integration issue only through the way they affected the recruitment and organization of the school board. The particular school desegregation issue which occurred in New Orleans--desegregation as required by a federal court order during what we called the post-Little Rock period--was in some ways a much simpler issue. It was (or should have been) clear to the participants that the schools were going to be desegregated. The "decision" which a southern school board made during this period was not a decision at all. In addition, the issue was of such overriding importance that it is hardly surprising to find that the more influential community leaders took control, directly or indirectly, in several of our cities. All this would make southern school desegregation a dull issue, if it were not for violence. In 1965, when the number of Negro students in desegregated schools jumped markedly without violent repercussions, there were few newspaper headlines.

For these reasons, our analysis has produced a set of factors in explaining the way different communities handled integration in the South which is quite unlike the factors we produced for the North. In the North, we saw evidence that higher-status communities, because of their less tightly organized decision-making processes, were less likely to acquiesce to Negro demands. In the South, "white collar" cities were more likely to desegregate efficiently, because, we think, of the fact that such cities are the ones with the most new industry and the most interest in economic development.

Despite the fact that the southern issue was simpler--or perhaps because of it--we did not succeed in presenting as satisfactory an explanation of community differences. The partial explanation which we have offered is shown in Figure IV.6. The rank-order correlations shown in this flow chart indicate that the ideology of the civic elite is the dominant factor in determining whether the city will acquiesce peacefully to the desegregation order, and that the composition of the school board is less important. As in the North, higher-status boards and liberal boards are more acquiescent.

In a larger sense, there is a parallel between the northern and southern analysis. In both cases we found a general relationship between "political style" and the outcome of the school desegregation issue. Although we are unable to pursue this problem in the present research, there seems to be reason to expect that this same "political style" will show up in comparative analyses of other issues.

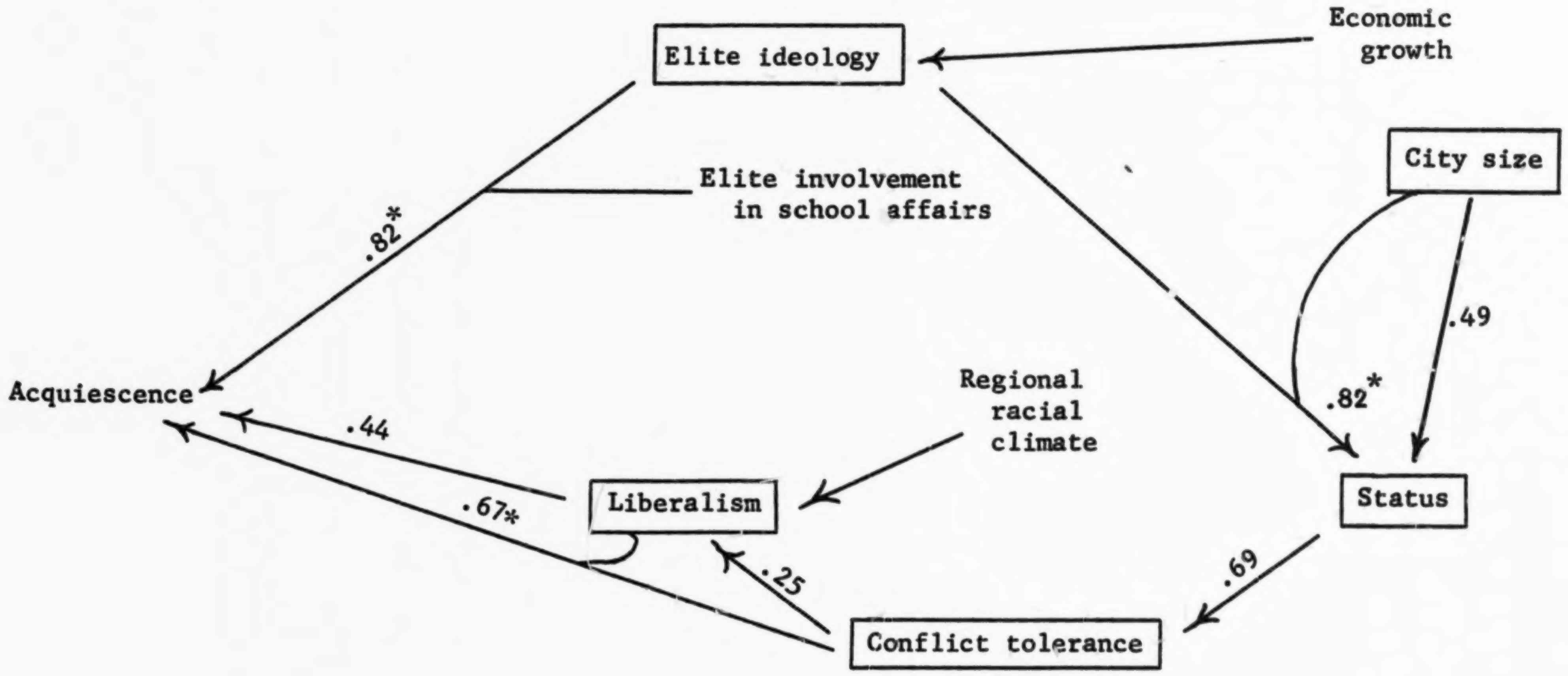
Economic growth
Elite ideology
City size
Elite involvement in school affairs
.82*
.49
.82*
Acquiescence
Regional racial climate
.44
Status
Liberalism
.67*
.25
.69
Conflict tolerance

Figure IV.6.--Rank-Order Correlations for Seven Southern Cities (*Indicates Combined Ranks of Two Factors).

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CHAPTER V

THE SOUTHERN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

In Chapter XIV of the northern report, we found that high-status Negro communities generally had a more militant civil rights leadership, were more active in civil rights, and held goals which were more diffuse and symbolic.[1] We have sufficient data from six southern cities--Atlanta, Columbus, Jacksonville, Miami, Montgomery, and New Orleans--to permit us to try a partial replication of these findings. While there is no important contradiction between the northern and southern data, there are some differences; indeed, we did not expect the pattern of relationships to be exactly the same in both parts of the nation. First of all, Negroes are still excluded from political office in most of these cities, so that the role of politics in shaping the style of the civil rights groups will be different. Second, the school integration issue is itself different. With a clear legal situation, there is no need to demonstrate or threaten retaliation at the polls; given enough time one plaintiff and his lawyer can desegregate a southern school system. But most important, the hostility toward Negroes in the South is so intense that local variations in the behavior of whites can have a very important effect on the behavior of the civil rights movement, and other correlations become of secondary importance.

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[1] In the North, we made the distinction between symbol-oriented programs, which sought to establish the symbols of racial equality--formal proclamations or laws and a commitment to their enforcement--and welfare-oriented programs, which were concerned with improving the status of individual Negroes. In effect, it is the distinction between the passage of a law and the effort to make the law yield real benefits for the "Negro on the street."

The Negro Community and the Goals of the Civil Rights Movement

In the North it was frequently the case that school integration was the cause célèbre of the civil rights movement--much of the energy of the movement is poured into the schools issue, and the whole ideology of the local movement is reflected in its behavior on this single issue. This does not occur in the South. Although the southern civil rights movement owes a great debt to the Brown decision, it has been too busy to waste excess energy in the matter of desegregating schools. School desegregation is set aside for the NAACP lawyers, while the rest of the movement becomes involved in a host of other issues--lunch counters, bus stations, employment, voting, a variety of "welfare" projects, and so forth. Under such conditions, it is difficult to characterize the civil rights movement as symbolic or welfare-oriented solely on the basis of their behavior in the school desegregation issue. However, we can contrast those cities which did nothing except push for court-ordered desegregation with those that went farther. For example, in several of our cities the NAACP either filed a second suit or took other action to force the school board to go beyond token integration. In other instances, the local movement may have worked to prevent Negro teachers and administrators from being fired or demoted in the process of desegregation. It seems reasonable to say that those cities which made a greater investment in the school desegregation issue are most like the symbol-oriented northern cities. Following this line of reasoning, we can divide the cities into three groups:

Group 1: Desegregation plus "integration" goals.--In this group we place the three cities which have filed a second suit or taken some other action to increase the amount of integration; the three cities are Atlanta, Columbus, and Miami.

Group 2: Desegregation plus welfare goals.--In this category we place Jacksonville. Although the Jacksonville civil rights groups have not been greatly concerned with the extent of integration in their desegregated school system, they have been concerned with such welfare issues as building new (Negro) schools, fair treatment of Negro teachers, and the inclusion of Negro representatives on citizens' committees working to improve the quality of the public schools.

Group 3: Desegregation only.--The two cities in this group, New Orleans and Montgomery, have so far expressed little interest in anything beyond the initial desegregation of the schools.

In the North the high-status cities held the most symbolic goals, and in the South we see some tendency for the hign-status[2] cities to fall into group 1, by having integrationist goals and generally going beyond desegregation. The exception to the correlation (see Figure V.1) is Columbus. Why did Columbus immediately begin a suit protesting the desegregation plan adopted by the board? One possible explanation for this deviant case is that, because Columbus desegregated under pressure from the federal government, the plaintiffs did not have to go through an emotionally and financially exhausting suit to obtain desegregation; thus it was easier for them to file a second suit.

Whatever the explanation for Columbus, the data generally support our interpretation of the northern data. We would expect the high-status community to have the most elaborate set of goals with regard to schools, and in general to place more emphasis upon the schools and upon school integration, and this seems to be the case. Or to put it another way, the middle-class-dominated community can "afford" to put aside the pressing welfare needs of the community to focus on school integration as a way to build the new South. In assessing the amount of action generated by a civil rights contingent in a given community during the school desegregation

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[2] As in the North, status is measured by the percentage of the population who are high-school graduates and the percentage who have white-collar jobs.

	Goal: Desegregation + Integration	Goal: Desegregation + Welfare	Goal: Desegregation Only
High	Atlanta Miami		
Social Status of Negro Community		Jacksonville	
			New Orleans Montgomery
Low	Columbus		

Fig. V.1.--Social Status of Negro Community and Typology of Goals of Civil Rights Movement.

campaign, three basic questions can be asked. (1) When did the action begin? (2) How did the Negro community get involved? (3) How was the desegregation managed? These questions point to the recruitment of plantiffs, the recruitment and support of student applicants for desegregation, and the Negro's role in the social control of the desegregation process.

There is considerable variation among the six cities. New Orleans, for example, filed suit early but did not pursue the case aggressively, allowed it to dawdle in the courts, and then played no role in handling the desegregation conflict.

At the other extreme, the civil rights groups of both Atlanta and Miami pressed the court suits strongly. In both cities an organized campaign was mounted to find plaintiffs, the attorneys handled the cases aggressively, and the civil rights groups continued to press the schools after desegregation.

Jacksonville ranks next in our ordering. In this city there was some difficulty in maintaining enough plaintiffs and student applicants, but in general the case was handled with reasonable efficiency. We should also note, however, that the Jacksonville case was not filed very early, and Jacksonville was late in settling the case.

Montgomery did not file suit until 1963, at approximately the same time that Birmingham became the first city in Alabama to desegregate. It was difficult to keep a corps of parents and students involved, even though the case took only a year.

Columbus also had difficulty recruiting plaintiffs. More important, relative to other cities in its state Columbus was late in filing suit even compared to Montgomery. Despite the fact that Atlanta desegregated two years before Birmingham, Columbus did not file until shortly before Montgomery did.

In addition to the way the cities differed in their handling of the suits, there are other differences. In Atlanta, the civil rights movement engaged in direct demonstrations over the integration issue. In Jacksonville, the post-desegregation campaign included a school boycott. And in all the cities except New Orleans, the civil rights groups made an effort to protect students on the first day of desegregation, or at least worked with white officials to prevent disorder.

On the basis of this information, we have ranked the six cities from most active to least active. Of course the ranking is not completely persuasive, since it necessarily compares different kinds of actions. Justification for the ranking is given in tabular form beside the name of each city. The appearance of Montgomery in last place on the list indicates

TABLE V.1

RANKING OF CITIES BY EXTENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVITY CONCERNING SCHOOLS

City	When Suit Filed	Difficulties in Pursuing Suit?	Helped Maintain Control Over Demonstrations?	Other Action
1. Atlanta	Early	No	Yes	Demonstrations
2. Miami	Early	No	Yes	
3. Jacksonville	Moderate	Some	Yes	Boycott
4. New Orleans	Early	Yes	No	
5. Columbus[a]	Late	Yes	Yes	
Montgomery[a]	Moderate	Yes	Yes	

[a] Tied.

that there is no necessary relationship between the level of civil rights activity on one issue or at one time with the level on other issues at other times. Montgomery was the scene of some of the most important civil rights activity in the South only a few years earlier.

We probably do not need to give warning that this ranking is one of the most problematic of any we have presented thus far. There is at best a fine distinction between the amount of activity in New Orleans, Columbus, and Montgomery. We have placed New Orleans highest among these last three only because its suit was filed very early; Montgomery is ranked below Columbus because when Columbus prepared for desegregation a number of important biracial meetings were held, indicating that its civil rights leaders (who are also the top influentials of the Negro community) were very much involved.

In the North we found that the most active communities were the most militant. This seemed to be because the cities with the most competition for leadership tended to provide opportunity for the young militant civil rights workers to move into leadership positions. The situation in the South is much more complex. One reason for the complexity is that some of these cities have until very recently had such oppressive anti-Negro sentiment that civil rights activity was highly dangerous. It is hardly surprising that the leaders of Miami and Atlanta should feel relatively free to press a desegregation suit, while those in Columbus and Montgomery should be reluctant. A ranking of cities from most anti-Negro to least would probably be approximately as follows:

Most Anti-Negro	Least Anti-Negro
Montgomery	Atlanta
New Orleans	Miami
Columbus	
Jacksonville	

Montgomery was the scene of the assault on the freedom riders in the bus station; the city police commissioner received a good deal of blame from the national press. New Orleans ranks as high as it does, not because of actual violence, but because it has resisted any efforts to set up effective channels of communication between the civil rights groups and the white leadership. Columbus is in some ways a "progressive" city, and it does have very good lines of communication between Negroes and whites, but it also has a strongly anti-Negro mass media, and a few years ago the president of the local NAACP was murdered in the central business district in daylight. Apparently he was shot by a local businessmen, although no one was ever convicted of the crime. Jacksonville, in fourth place on the list, has a government which does not take inflammatory action, but, like New Orleans, it is burdened with a violent "redneck" population in the outlying areas of Duval County. (We should recall here that the home of one of the first Negro transfer students was burned during desegregation.) Only Miami and Atlanta have no recent record of important anti-Negro activity. Atlanta is ranked above Miami because of the presence of a segregationist candidate for mayor in the last two elections (although he was soundly defeated).

Notice that this listing of degree of anti-Negro sentiment correlates strongly with the amount of civil rights activity ($r = -.84$). This means that simply analyzing the structure of the civil rights movement, independent of the behavior of the white community, cannot explain action.

The second reason why the analysis we used in the North cannot be replicated in the South has to do with the peculiar complexities of southern Negro militancy. In the northern volume we defined militancy as the belief that progress will come about only through the use of power, rather than through any appeal to the humanity of whites. But such militancy involves a complete break with the famous paternalism of the old South, and this is psychologically a difficult step to take in a strongly anti-Negro climate, where the use of power is dangerous. Thus, the cities with the most favorable racial climates--Atlanta and Miami--also have the most militant leadership. The third most highly militant city is one which has had experience using power: Montgomery. And Montgomery is a good example of why the pattern must be complex, for the hard-core South--Albany, the Mississippi delta, and black-belt Alabama, for example--is the region which has received the most outside assistance. The effect of this assistance is to encourage the kind of confrontation which will bring out militant leaders and increase the militancy of the existing leadership. Thus both "good" and "bad" cities can develop militant leadership.

The second difficulty with southern militancy is that the older civil rights leaders involved in school desegregation are more militant than the younger (see Table V.2). Although there are not enough cases to make this finding statistically significant by itself, the correlation of age with militancy is significantly different from the one found in the

North. It is conceivable that this finding is a statistical accident. But we can see two reasons why the older southern leader might be more militant than his younger colleague. First, some of the young southern leadership has been drawn away from the local scene--either into northern cities or into the national civil rights movement. The other factor is a generational effect. The older men grew up while the South was still an oppressive society and became discouraged long ago; the young men have seen rapid change during their own lifetime and are therefore more optimistic about the future. In the North one would expect exactly the opposite: the older men grew up in the North (or came there) during an era when the North was considered a Mecca; the young civil rights leaders have devoted much of their energy to showing that the North is not a promised land just yet. In the national climate of the 1950's and 1960's, the young northerner has experienced a revolution of rising expectations, only to discover that positions of high status in northern society are still not open to him.

TABLE V.2

AGE AND MILITANCY, FOR SOUTHERN CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS

Age	Per Cent Militant	N
Under 45	40	10
45 and over	67	12

$\underline{Q} = .67$; $\underline{p} < .20$ (two-tailed test).

This suggests that the most militant cities will be those in which a stable group of older civil rights leaders have retained control of the movement. On the other hand, even if the young leader is less militant, he may still be more open to new techniques and to establishing new organizational bases. Thus, we see again that militancy probably works in opposite directions.

The actual correlation of militancy with action is positive (the more militant, the more action) but the correlation is low ($\underline{r}$ = .36). For this reason it seems best to avoid speculating about the intervening psychological mechanisms and turn directly to structural factors.

Competition

In the North we saw that the most active cities also had the most competition for leadership. In the South, a series of sociometric questions were used which give us a picture of the structure of the civil rights leadership. In describing civil rights leadership in the South, we are also describing the Negro community leadership, since any Negro problem is almost by definition a civil rights problem. A Negro community leader can almost always be considered a civil rights leader as well.

Most communities, unless they are very small, have a diffuse leadership rather than a power structure. In the Deep South, the diffuse and unstructured Negro community leadership is most often also the leadership of the civil rights movement, so that the civil rights movement in these communities also lacks a power structure. This seems to be partly the case in our two most southern cities, Montgomery and New Orleans. The civil rights leadership is an informal collection of men, with no clear boundary to the leadership group and no one recognized as the leader. At the time of the Montgomery bus boycott, Martin Luther King and his immediate aides represented a leadership structure, but these men have all left the city to work in the national movement.

Negro leader and civil rights leader are also synonymous in Columbus, but the leadership of the movement there is not diffuse simply because the Negro community itself has a true power structure. In the two previous generations, Columbus had a monolithic structure led by one man. When the second such leader died, leadership passed into the hands of a tightly knit group of five men. Our interviewer attended one of the daily luncheons where these men meet to thrash out community problems. They handle civil rights activity through negotiation. One of the group is in direct contact with a representative of the white leadership in Columbus, and a civil rights demand tends to take the form of a quiet conversation between these two ambassadors. The Negro leaders are powerful and are willing to use their power on occasion. (When one department store refused to go along when the others opened their lunch counters, a quiet boycott was organized which nearly bankrupted it before it capitulated.)

The other three cities tend to have civil rights specialists as northern cities do. In Miami, this results in a monolithic leadership similar to that in Columbus. The leader is a charismatic Episcopal priest, a long-time NAACP leader on the local and national levels. Flanked by many secondary leaders who are area specialists or are committed to a particular strategy, he has been able to keep the civil rights leadership centralized into one major thrust.[3]

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[3] His concept of the leader's function is evidenced by his decision to step down from the presidency of the NAACP because his image was too acceptable to the "boys downtown." His feeling is that a major Negro leader should be unpredictable enough to present a threat but reasonable enough to win the confidence of his white counterparts. He feels he has now dealt with them so long that he has become too predictable.

The two remaining cities are each divided into two organized factions, and we shall call them "dichotomous" cities for this reason. Jacksonville has a powerful Negro political organization; its leaders are fairly conservative and concentrate on negotiation with white leaders (but without the willingness to use their power that the Columbus group has). The NAACP is controlled by a militant reform faction which is heavily committed to demonstrations. Atlanta, the other dichotomous city, is split by a conflict between the generations which permeates the political arena, the NAACP and the leadership of the city's seven Negro colleges.

In Table V.3 we compare the leadership structures of the six cities with their militancy and the extent of their civil rights activity in school desegregation. Since Jacksonville, like St. Louis and Newark in the

TABLE V.3

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES, MILITANCY, AND ACTION

City	Leadership Structure	Militancy	Level of School Desegregation Activity (1= High)
Specialized leadership:			
Jacksonville	Dichotomous	High	3
Atlanta	Dichotomous	High	1
Miami	Monolithic	Medium	2
General leadership:			
Montgomery	Diffuse	High	5
New Orleans	Diffuse	Low	4
Columbus	Monolithic	Medium	5

North, has a civil rights movement whose goals conflict with those of the Negro politicians, we would expect it to be the most militant city. Jacksonville's civil rights leaders are no more militant in their attitudes than the leaders of Atlanta and Montgomery. But Jacksonville did organize a city-wide three-day boycott during its battle with the school system, and we do not know of any boycott lasting this long in any other city, North or South. We would expect the three cities without specialized civil rights leadership to be less militant, and here the glaring exception is Montgomery. We think that the militancy of Montgomery is a result of the city's ties to the national civil rights movement and its history as a leader in the southern civil rights revolution. Its leaders adopted the values of militancy from experience and association after they became leaders. If we hypothesize that cities with specialized civil rights leadership will have more civil rights activity than others, and cities whose leadership is monolithic will have less, we find that our hypothesis is supported (r = .78).

Political Participation and Leadership Structure

It is interesting that there is a perfect relationship between the leadership structure and the way in which the Negro community participates in local politics. In both of the diffuse cities (Montgomery and New Orleans) are virtually excluded from political leadership; in the two monolithic cities (Columbus and Miami) they are informally co-opted into the political arena; and in the two dichotomous cities (Atlanta and Jacksonville) they hold formal or semiformal positions in politics.

Of course it is not correct to say that Negroes are completely excluded from politics in New Orleans and Montgomery, but compared to the other cities they are in a different position. In New Orleans, which may elect a Negro state legislator in the near future, there is little relationship between Negro and white political leaders--they tend not to see each other. Less than one-fifth of the Negroes in Montgomery were registered in 1958,[4] and Negro political activity there was handled by the civil rights groups. In Columbus and Miami the Negro community leaders are consulted about political matters on a regular basis. In Jacksonville Negroes are directly involved in the local political machine, and in Atlanta Negroes hold a variety of elected offices--a city council post, two school board seats, and (since redistricting) seven seats in the state legislature.

The type of political participation Negroes may take in a city almost determines the Negro leadership structure. In a city which places Negroes in formal political positions, there is inevitable conflict within the Negro community; one ambitious leader finds himself in conflict with others as he competes for a party or governmental office. Conversely, without politics and the divisiveness which necessarily accompanies it, there is not much reason for conflict. To be sure, it is possible for people to disagree over ideological issues--this is part of the conflict between the generations in Atlanta--but even here there is not really very much disagreement among Negro leaders.

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[4] The Southern Regional Council found that at most 9.4 per cent of the registered voters were Negro. In 1960, Negroes made up 34 per cent of the voting-age population. If two-thirds of all whites were registered, this would mean that approximately 18 per cent of the Negroes were registered.

The four cities where Negroes are excluded from formal political positions fall into two groups: those where informal contact between whites and Negroes is high and those where it is low. It seems plausible that in a city with high informal contact between Negro leaders and white political figures, the Negro leadership must be monolithic in structure: the Negro community must have a spokesman, and this in turn requires a defined leadership group. The two diffusely organized cities, on the other hand, do not need a single spokesman. Negroes are not communicating with whites on basic problems, and at the time we were interviewing no major civil rights activity was taking place. It seems very likely that if Montgomery were to undertake another project the size of the bus boycott, it would develop a much more monolithic structure.

Community Social Status

We are left with one variable to consider--socio-economic status. There is a strong interrelationship in a Negro community's socio-economic status, type of leadership structure, and amount of civil rights activity. In Figure V.2 we see that the higher the social status of the Negro community, the more likely the city is to have a specialized civil rights leadership and the less likely it is to have a monolithic structure. The only city out of place is Jacksonville, which has a dichotomous leadership not because the status of its Negro community is high but because of the presence of a political machine.

This would lead us to predict that the high-status cities, having a specialized leadership and more competition for leadership positions, would be more militant, but unfortunately we cannot test this hypothesis

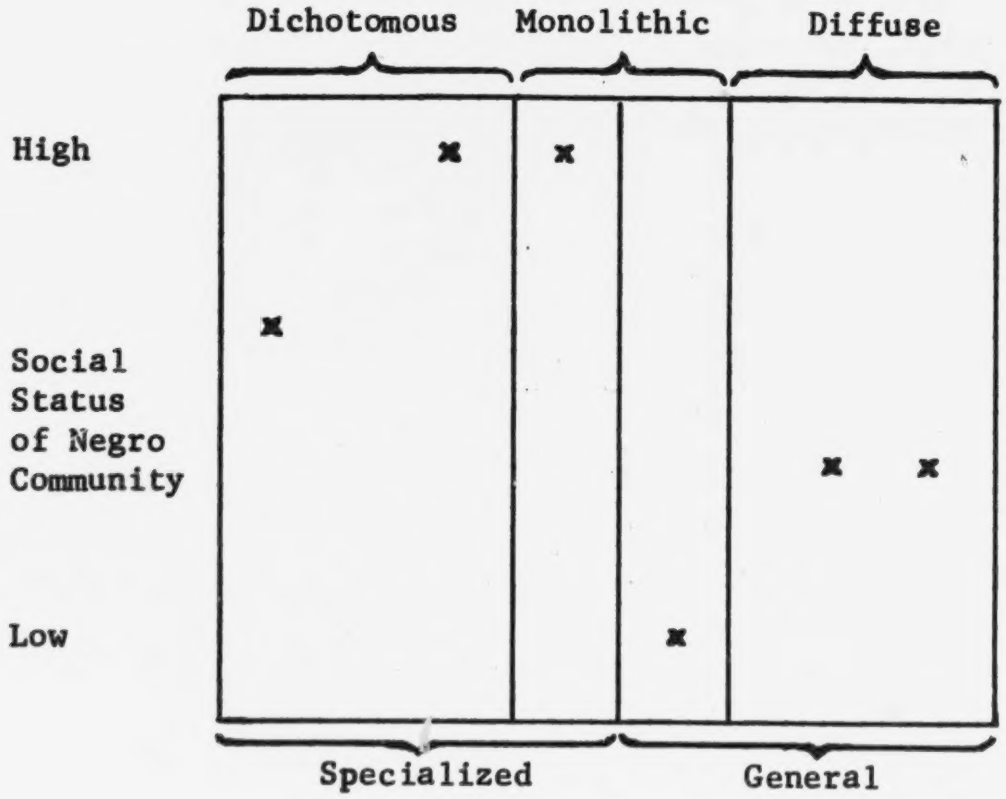

Figure V.2.--Social Status of Negro Community and Civil Rights Leadership Structure.

very well. As noted earlier, the militancy of Jacksonville can be explained by the presence of a political machine, and the high militancy scores of Montgomery can be attributed to the fact that Montgomery is the birthplace of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. That leaves only four others to test the hypothesis on. While it is true that Atlanta (the city of highest status), is the most militant, and New Orleans (third of the four in social status) is the least militant, so that the correlation is in the right direction, this cannot be considered useful evidence. The correlation of social status with level of civil rights activity is high, however, and this is what we would expect. The correlation, given in Figure V.3, is .94.

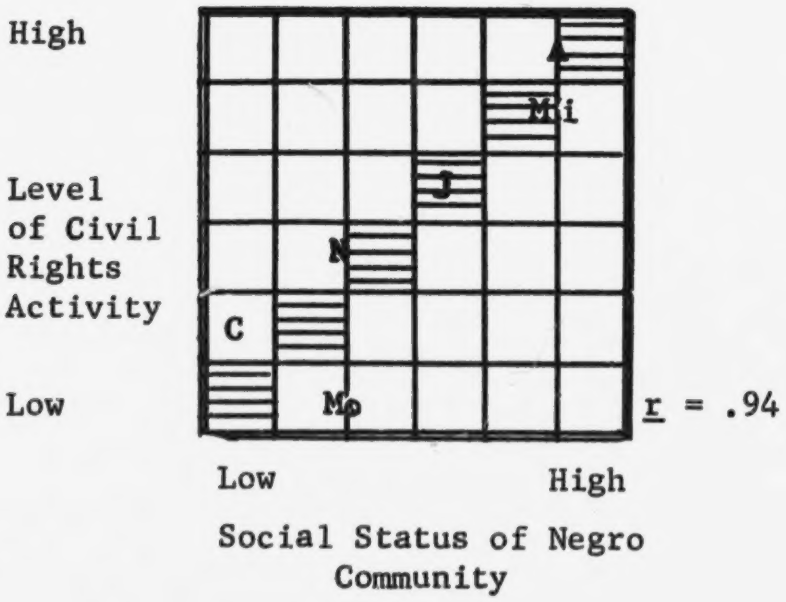

Figure V.3.--Social Status of Negro Community and Level of Its Civil Rights Activity. A--Atlanta; C--Columbus; J--Jacksonville; Mi--Miami; Mo--Montgomery; N--New Orleans.

Summary

We have found a pattern of positive correlations between five variables: cities in which the political participation and social status of Negroes is high tend to have competition for civil rights leadership, are more militant, and have a greater amount of civil rights activity. Three of these variables were used in the northern analysis, and the correlations between the three (status, militancy, and action) were positive there also. As we commented at the beginning of the chapter, the South is different from the North, but our findings for the South do not contradict any of our northern findings.

But we cannot combine this set of positive correlations into a single persuasive theory. One obvious line of argument is to say that high-status cities have a larger supply of leadership and the resources for a more elaborate organizational base. These factors lead to a more complex leadership structure (especially if the leadership roles are specific to civil rights activity), which in turn attracts more militant candidates for leadership and inspires higher levels of action. This argument seems sound on its face and is almost identical to the conclusions we drew about the North. But it ignores the unignorable differences in the racial climate of these cities. It is just as easy to argue that a "progressive city" attracts Negro high-school and college graduates (or at least does not banish them) and, being progressive, invites Negroes into the political arena, which complicates and divides the Negro leadership structure, which in turn creates room for more militant civil rights leaders who organize more civil rights activity.

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CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The goal of our research project was to analyze, from a political perspective, one issue as it occurred in fifteen different cities. In the pursuit of this goal we have found ourselves involved in several different types of analysis.

First, we have written nine case studies of cities dealing with the desegregation conflict.

Second, we have defined the two issues of school integration. We found this necessary because there is little resemblance, from a decision-making point of view, between school integration in a northern city and court-ordered desegregation in a southern city. In analyzing the issue in the North, we tried to determine who has been leading the campaign for integration and what they seem to want. We also tried to determine what the school superintendent, the voter, and the school board member think of the demands made upon them. In the South, where the issue itself is crystal-clear, we considered the perspective taken by the white southern leadership and the ways this perspective has changed from 1954 to the present.

Third, we have been forced to consider the question of how a school board (which is a particular kind of small, formally organized group) makes decisions. After analyzing the school board itself, we examined the process by which a government recruits its school board members. This is, of course, one rather special case of the general topic concerning how governmental offices are filled. But in the course of answering (or attempting to answer) that question, we had to look at one of the most complex issues in the study of American local government: The phenomenon of the businessmen and others who, without holding formal office, make up a civic elite which influences the government's actions.

Having performed this analysis of the school board, we have then conducted a similar study of the civil rights movement. In its most general form it is the same sort of analysis, since it deals with the same three questions--who occupied the decision-making offices, what influences were brought to bear on them, and how were they recruited to office--but in fact the details of the analysis are quite different. The school board is a formally chartered part of the government; the civil rights movement functions almost as if it were a part of the Negro community's "government," but it is informally organized and has no legal authority. We looked both at cities where the civil rights movement is a rather peripheral part of the Negro leadership structure and at cities where the civil rights leadership is virtually identical to the civic elite of the Negro community.

And out of all of this we have tried to draw out some ideas to explain the ways in which different economic bases and different types of populations or governmental structures make cities different in their decision-making styles.

Since there are summaries at the end of each analytical chapter, we will not try to repeat all the findings or list all the hypotheses we have put forward. However, it may be worthwhile to mention some of the more intriguing and suggestive hypotheses here.[1]

1. In both the North and South, we began by assuming that civil rights leaders would be concerned almost exclusively with placing as many Negro students as possible in integrated schools. This is an important concern, but it is not the single overriding goal of the leadership in either the North or the South. In both areas, the main goal seems to be persuading (or forcing) the school board to make the strongest possible commitment to the concept of racial equality. And in either area a school board can demonstrate this commitment without desegregating every school, but a school board which permits a large amount of integration may be attacked if its public position does not live up to its actual behavior. In a word, the civil rights movement is more symbol-oriented than we expected it to be.

2. We also began the study with the basic assumption that the school integration decision would be a complex bargaining arrangement, the result of rather elaborate negotiations, threats, and counterthreats. Obvious though this assumption may be, it is not a good way to approach the problem. We found instead that in most cases the school board members first responded to the issue by acting according to their predispositions about civil rights; liberal boards tended to integrate, conservative boards did not. By increasing the pressure, the civil rights movement

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[1] Although the manner in which some of these hypotheses must be stated makes them applicable only to the North or only to the South, we felt that giving them all together at the end of the second volume of the report may help the reader think about the ways in which the statements have implications for both studies.

might be able to exhort some minor additional concessions or to escalate the conflict into an all-out battle, but it could not change the overall tone of the board's behavior.

3. It is commonly assumed that school superintendents exert much more influence over the policy of the school system than does the school board. Our data show the precise opposite: the school board sets the tone of the integration decision and the superintendent plays a less important role.

4. The politically appointed school board members are more conservative on racial matters and express other attitudes which we summarize as an unwillingness or inability to tolerate conflict. In general, their behavior makes it understandable why minor party officials are sometimes called "party hacks."

5. We have also seen some evidence that the level of internal conflict within the school board is a factor in determining how far the board will go to satisfy the civil rights movement: the conflict-ridden board has difficulty taking action.[2]

6. It is not surprising that the composition of the school board should reflect the political style of the city. What is surprising is that the role of the civic elite is one of the most important components of this political style. The hypothesis which we think describes this best is somewhat different from those advanced by other students of local government. The power-structure theorists argue that the holders of wealth and social status exercise rather definite power and are informally organized

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[2] This hypothesis was developed in our northern analysis. It cannot be easily tested with our southern data, so we cannot say how important this factor is in the South.

into a power structure, at the pinnacle of which is one man, a small group, or two or three competing leaders. While this might describe New Orleans, Columbus, or Atlanta, we did not find such a power structure in the northern cities. There are too many cases of important decisions being made by men who were obviously not key influentials, and there are even cases in which extremely important men were defeated. Instead we have hypothesized that the civic elite comprises a loosely organized "class," whose members operate as individuals seeking goals which the members of this class agree upon. But the civic elite does exercise a more important role in managing the policy regarding school board appointments: we think the existence of reform boards can be attributed to continued pressure by members of the elite over a period of years.

7. In the North, then, the question is "How much influence do the elites have?" In the South, however, the more important question is "What is the ideological position of the elite?" We could find no evidence that the elite of New Orleans failed to act out of weakness; indeed, New Orleans has a more organized and visible elite structure than several of the other southern cities. But this power structure is committed to traditional values and is oblivious to the social costs of trying to maintain those values.

8. We have found evidence in three test cases (out of four) that the higher the social status of the community, the more prone it is to controversy. In the North there is less consensus among the school board members of high-status cities(resulting, we suspect, from the fact that the boards are more heterogeneous, since board members are recruited in a variety of different ways to satisfy the many and various pressures

exerted by a high-status community), and this means that even liberal boards will be less acquiescent and more prone to conflict. We also found that higher-status Negro communities are more militant and hold more symbolic goals. In the South, we found that higher-status Negro communities develop more elaborate goals and organize more civil rights activity. To sum these three cases up, high-status communities pour more energy into decision-making, and this participation greatly encourages conflict and provides support for extremist positions. In the fourth case, however, we did not find this pattern. We attribute its absence to the existence of what we think is a more important variable: high-status communities in the South have a white civic leadership which is committed to progress, and this is of sufficient importance to override the higher participation level of the citizenry.

9. Closely related to social status is the level of political party organization. High-status cities tend to have weaker political parties, and this in turn tends to magnify the effect of citizen participation, since the elected official is not insulated from the voter. Without political parties to freeze the voter's loyalty, each interest group represents a serious block of fickle voters who must be appeased.

Several serious methodological problems have plagued our study, the most serious being the small sample size. This predicament has had its usual effect--making it impossible to find significant differences--but more important, it has often prevented us from distinguishing between two factors, each of which seems perfectly capable of explaining the dependent variable. The problem is that we have been unable to control for one variable while looking at the effect of a second. This same problem has bothered other students of local government, and the usual solution (which is the one we take here) has been to construct a typology. A typology enables us to make the most fundamental distinctions between cities. By dividing cities into some small number of groups and constructing a typology, we are making a priori commitment to regarding certain factors as most important, others as less so. For example, Williams and Adrian (1963) divide their four cities according to the kinds of values the cities display in their decision-making process. Agger, Goldrich, and Swanson (1964) classify cities according to what we might call the general structure of the political decision-making group. In either case, the authors' assumption is that with only four cases, the best one can do is to pull out the fundamental differences between the cities. Finer distinctions can only be hinted at. Another way one can build a typology is by determining what seems to be the most important factor, then determining the second most important factor, and cross-tabulating them to build a 2 x 2 table. This is the approach used by Alford (1964) and is the approach we used in analyzing our northern cities. In principle one can build as complex a typology as he wishes by adding additional factors until there are no cases left.

We used another typology in preparing this report--one which is centered around the historical development of the relationship between the political party leaders and the holders of high social status. We have not formally presented it because it remains too vague for careful discussion. However, we should point out that some of our cities seem presently to represent some of the historical stages through which New Haven and Chicago have gone, according to Dahl (1961) and Bradley and Zald (1965). For example, we think that, despite the presence of Fort Benning, Columbus remains in some ways a patrician city similar to New Haven in the eighteenth century, when the established elite of that city took on the task of government. In other ways, Columbus resembles the New Haven of the early nineteenth century, or Chicago in its early days, when the leading industrialists maintained control of the government. New Orleans and Jacksonville, on the other hand, seem reminiscent of New Haven or Chicago at the end of the nineteenth century. The economic elite is still active in local politics and may even have one of its own members in the mayor's office, but since working-class politics have become important, the extent of the elite's influence has been only minor. Interestingly enough, at the turn of the century, politics was also the politics of Lincoln Steffens, in whose time business participated in politics primarily out of narrow self-interest, and this description fits Jacksonville better than any of our other cities. After the turn of the century in New Haven, and a little later in Chicago, politics became strictly a working-class affair, with ethnic "ex-plebes" holding the major elected offices. This is the case today in Buffalo, Bay City, and Newark. Finally, Dahl refers to Richard Lee, the mayor of New Haven at the time of his study, as one of the "new men" who can appeal across class lines to the rapidly growing "good government" vote. This description would certainly fit Mayor Tucker of St. Louis or the last two mayors of Atlanta, and such "new men" would fit into the political style of Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and in some ways, even Miami.

Dahl argues that these stages are the result of the changes in New Haven's economy and population composition--that first industrialization, then class conflict, and finally the death of class conflict are principle factors in explaining the end of each of the three preceding eras. Parallel to this, the change in New Haven's politics has partly affected the structure and the values of the business community. Businessmen first took control from the patricians, then were forced out by the working-class vote, and finally have begun to return in quasi-governmental roles, armed with a new ideology of consensus rather than conflict.

The parallels between Dahl's historical analysis of New Haven and our own cross-sectional analysis tend to confirm our belief in the utility of a concept like "political style." We expect to find differences in the various types of decisions a local government must make, but we think that these differences will not be enough to override the similarities. The similarities are present because the structure of decision-making is not very complex in the cities we have studied. In each case, the four important actors are the elected officials, persons or groups with "special interests," the citizenry, and the civic elite.

In cities the size of New Orleans, there are no special interests which can exert overwhelming power in a variety of issues, and interest groups are generally either organized on a temporary basis, to struggle with a particular issue, or else they are very fluid organizations which can change easily from one point in time to the next. (For example, we do not believe that one can accurately predict the behavior of an NAACP chapter merely from knowing its behavior ten years earlier.) For this reason, we can expect to find a strong correlation between the behavior of the interest groups and the character of the population segment which is its base.

This is not as true for the elected officials, since the formal structure of government does persist from one time period to the next. For example, a city which had weak political parties twenty years ago is likely to have weak parties now. And the type of party determines in large measure the extent to which the elected officials listen to the voters. If parties are strong, the political leaders know they can maintain a stable voting bloc despite temporary divisions on particular issues; if parties are weak, any issue--no matter how temporary--may serve to realign the electorate. It is probably true that the composition of the electorate eventually determines the structure of government, and in this sense there will be at least a weak correlation between the behavior of the elected officials and the character of the electorate.

Similarly, there should be a relationship between the civic leaders' ideology and interest in local politics and the response of the elected officials. This pattern will derive partly from the nature of the civic --their personal orientations toward their community, for example-- but it will also derive from the historical pattern of their interaction with politicians. If politics has been based on ethnic rivalry and machine-style organization, the members of the elite will have little to offer the government, and if their overtures are resisted, they will become apathetic. The point is that these four factors--the electorate's attitudes, the electorate's relationship to the government, the civic elite's ideology and internal organization, and the elite's relation to the government--are all interrelated; the behavior of each modifies the behavior of the others. Furthermore, these four factors are the major determinants of the way in which the government will respond to any particular issue. The interaction of these four factors determines what we have called the political style of the city and what Williams and Adrian (1963) have called the values which the government endorses. Of course, in any particular issue there are incidental or even accidental factors which are important, but these factors are best understood in the context of the political style.

In the South, this political style is translated into the willingness or ability of the civic and political leaders to exercise direct social control. In the North, the way in which political style explains the outcome of the desegregation process is much less obvious. We have said that the government's relationship to the electorate, on the one hand, and to the civic elite, on the other, are the components of political style. But in the northern school desegregation controversy, neither the electorate nor the civic elite plays an important role. Indeed, the school system may even ignore the other sectors of the government. Still, the relationship of the school system to the electorate and to the civic elite determines (if only indirectly) the composition of the school board. So even this most autonomous agency of northern local government acts out its part in a manner similar to the other bodies that determine the community's decision-making style.

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